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THE WAYS OF WAR

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Emery Walker ph. sc.

Thos M. Kettle

THE WAYS OF WAR

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WITH A [illegible]

MARY [illegible]

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1917

Lafayette Dublin, photographer Emery Walker ph.sc.

Thos M. Kettle

THE WAYS OF WAR

BY

PROFESSOR T. M. KETTLE

LIEUT. 9TH DUBLIN FUSILIERS

WITH A MEMOIR BY HIS WIFE

MARY S. KETTLE

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

NEW YORK
CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
1917

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UNIV. OF
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TO

MY DEAR WIFE AND COMRADE

EX UMBRIS ET IMAGINIBUS IN VERITATEM

397335

PREFATORY NOTE

PERHAPS the order of the chapters in the present book requires a word of explanation. They have a natural sequence as the confessions of an Irish man of letters as to why he felt called upon to offer up his life in the war for the freedom of the world. Kettle was one of the most brilliant figures both in the Young Ireland and Young Europe of his time. The opening chapters reveal him as a Nationalist concerned about the liberty not only of Ireland—though he never for a moment forgot that — but of every nation, small and great. He hoped to make these chapters part of a separate book, expounding the Irish attitude to the war; but unfortunately, as one must think, the War Office would not permit an Irish Officer to put his name to a work of the kind. After the chapters describing the inevitable sympathy of an Irishman with Serbia and Belgium—little nations attacked by two Imperial bullies—comes an account of the tragic scenes Kettle himself witnessed in Belgium, where he served as a war-correspondent in the early days of the war. "Silhouettes from the Front," which follow, describe what he saw and felt later on, when, having taken a commission in the Dublin Fusiliers, he accompanied his regiment to France in time to take part in the

Battle of the Somme. Then some chapters containing hints of that passion for France which was one of the great passions of his life. One of these, entitled "The New France," was written before the war had made the world realise that France is still the triumphant flag-bearer of European civilisation. Then, in "The Gospel of the Devil," we have an examination of the armed philosophies that have laid so much of France and the rest of Europe desolate. The book closes with "Trade or Honour?"—an appeal to the Allies to preserve high and disinterested motives in ending the war as in beginning it, and to turn a deaf ear to those political hucksters to whom gain means more than freedom. Thus "The Ways of War" is a book, not only of patriotism, but of international idealism. Above all, it is a passionate human document—the "apologia pro vita sua" of a soldier who died for freedom.

L.

Many of the chapters in this book have already appeared in various newspapers and magazines, to the editors and proprietors of which thanks are due for permission to reprint them here. The sources of the chapters referred to are as follows—

"Under the Heel of the Hun"
"Zur Erinnerung"
"The Way to the Trenches"
"G.H.Q." } *Daily News.*

"Belgium in Time of Peace": *Freeman's Journal.*
"The New France": *Irish Ecclesiastical Record.*
"The Soldier-Priests of France": *The Hibernian Journal.*
"The Gospel of the Devil": *T. P.'s War Journal.*

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THE WAYS OF WAR

MEMOIR

My husband in his last letter to his brother, written on the 8th of September, 1916, on the battlefield, expressed the wish that I should write a memoir of him as a preface to his war book. It is only at his express instance that I would have undertaken the writing of such a memoir, as there are many obvious reasons—notably two—why I am unfitted for that high duty. I have not the literary gifts of many of his distinguished friends, who in writing of him would have exercised their powers of sympathetic understanding and appreciation to the uttermost. But the personal relationship is an even greater handicap. If the reader will accept me as his comrade—since he has honoured me with the proud distinction—I shall do my best to interpret the "soul-side" with which he "faced the world." For my shortcomings, I must crave indulgence. I only bring to this task the vision of love.

I shall give hereafter a biographical sketch, but first I wish to deal with his attitude to the

war and a few points which he desired to be emphasised.

What urged him—the scholar, the metaphysician, the poet, above all the Irishman, irrevocably and immutably Irish, the man of peace, who had nothing of the soldier except courage—to take a commission in the British Army and engage in the cruel and bloody business of war? His motives for taking this step, he wished to be made clear beyond misrepresentation. It should be unnecessary to do this, as he proclaimed them on many platforms and in many papers. His attitude and action are the natural sequence and logic of his character and ideals. Since I first knew him, he loved to call himself a "capitaine routier" of freedom, and that is the alpha and omega of his whole personality. As Mr. Lynd has said, he was not a Nationalist through love of a flag, but through love of freedom. It was this love of freedom that made him in his student days in the Royal University lead the protest against the playing of "God Save the King" at the conferring of Degrees. The words of the Students' manifesto went, "We desire to protest against the unjust, wasteful and inefficient Government of which that air is a symbol." It was the same love of freedom that made him during the Boer War distribute in the streets of Dublin anti-recruiting leaflets. The Tom Kettle who did these things, who said in an election speech in 1910 that "for

his part he preferred German Invasion to British Finance," was the same Tom Kettle who believed it Ireland's duty in 1914 to take the sword against Germany as the Ally of England.

"This war is without parallel," he wrote in August, 1914; "Britain, France, Russia, enter it, purged from their past sins of domination. France is right now as she was wrong in 1870, England is right now as she was wrong in the Boer War, Russia is right now as she was wrong on Bloody Sunday."

In August and September, he acted as war correspondent for the *Daily News,* and in this capacity was a witness of the agony of Belgium. He returned to Ireland burning with indignation against Prussia. He referred to Germany as "the outlaw of Europe." "It is impossible not to be with Belgium in this struggle," he wrote to the *Daily News;* "it is impossible any longer to be passive. Germany has thrown down a well-considered challenge to all the forces of our civilisation. War is hell, but it is only a hell of suffering, not of dishonour, and through it, over its flaming coals, Justice must walk, were it on bare feet."

It was as an Irish soldier in the army of Europe and civilisation that he entered the war. "He was horrified," said Mr. Lynd very truly, "by the spectacle of a bully let loose on a little nation. He was horrified, too, at the philosophic lie at the back of all this greed of territory and power. He

was horrified at seeing the Europe he loved going down into brawling and bloody ruin. Not least —and no one can understand contemporary Ireland who does not realise this—he was horrified by the thought that if Germany won, Belgium would be what he had mourned in Ireland—a nation in chains. An international Nationalist—that was the mood in which he offered his services to the War Office."

I think the chief reason his motives have been misunderstood is that few have gone to the trouble of understanding his wide outlook. He was a European. He was deeply steeped in European culture. He was *au courant* with European politics. He knew his France, his Germany, his Russia as well as we know our Limerick, Cork and Belfast. Mr. Healy once said his idea of a nation ended with the Kish lightship. Tom Kettle's ideal was an Ireland identified with the life of Europe. "Ireland," he wrote, "awaits her Goethe who will one day arise to teach her that, while a strong nation has herself for centre, she has the universe for circumference. . . . My only programme for Ireland consists in equal parts of Home Rule and the Ten Commandments. My only counsel to Ireland is, that to become deeply Irish, she must become European."

That counsel was given six years before the war. It was acting on that counsel that he deemed it right to make the final sacrifice, and in a Euro-

pean struggle sign his ideal with the seal of his blood. England and English thought had nothing to do with his attitude to the war. England happened to be on the side of Justice. He acknowledges that, but says rather bitterly, "England goes to fight for liberty in Europe but junkerdom in Ireland." Mr. Shane Leslie is absolutely right when he says, "He died for no Imperialistic concept, no fatuous Jingoism."

"Let this war go forward," he wrote to the *Daily News* in 1914, "on its own merits and its own strong justice. After the war of the peoples, let us have the peoples' peace. Let us drop statecraft and return to the Ten Commandments—now that we have got such a good bit of the way back."

Mr. Padraic Colum, in a memoir of my husband in the Irish-American paper, *Ireland,* says: "When the Germans broke into Belgium, he advised the Irish to join the British Army and to fight for the rights of small nationalities. Had death found him in those early days he would at least have died for a cause he believed in." I think Mr. Colum, if only for the sake of an old friendship, might have troubled to understand the idea for which Tom Kettle died, and in which he believed to the end. Does Mr. Colum mean to suggest that my husband no longer believed in the maintenance of the rights of small nationalities? Was his enthusiasm for Belgium quenched—Belgium the heroic who preferred to lose all that she

might gain her own soul? Is not Belgium still an invaded country? And even if England juggles with Ireland's liberty, is not the fight for truth and justice to go on? As my husband says in this volume, "Ireland had a duty not only to herself but to the world . . . and whatever befell, the path taken by her must be the path of honour and justice."

In one of my last letters from him, he speaks his faith, even if it is the faith of a sad and burdened soul: "It is a grim and awful job, and no man can feel up to it. The waste—the science of waste and bloodshed! How my heart loathes it and yet it is God's only way to Justice."

Mr. Colum proceeds: "He knew by the dreams he remembered that his place should have been with those who died for the cause of Irish Nationality." I postulate that Tom Kettle died most nobly for the cause of Irish Nationality, in dying for the cause of European honour.

Mr. Colum continues: "He knew she (Ireland) would not now take her eyes from the scroll that bears the names of Pearse and Plunkett and O'Rahilly and so many others, and yet, Thomas Kettle at the last would not have grudged these men Ireland's proud remembrance." I think, too, I may confidently assert that Tom Kettle's name will be entered on the scroll of Irish patriots, and that he has earned, and will have, Ireland's "proud remembrance" quite as much as the rebel leaders

whose valour and noble disinterestedness he honoured, but whose ideals he most emphatically did not share.

Mr. Leslie is in shining contrast to Mr. Colum in sympathetic understanding: "Irishmen will think of him with his gentle brother-in-law, Sheehy-Skeffington, as two intellectuals who, after their manner and their light, wrought and thought and died for Ireland. What boots it if one was murdered by a British officer and the other was slain in honourable war by Germans? To Ireland, they are both lovable, and in the Irish mind, their memory shall not fail. . . . . Ireland knows that they were both men of peace and that they both offered their lives for her. England can claim neither. In death, they are divided, but in the heart of Ireland they are one."

In *The Day's Burden,* my husband referred to Ireland as "the spectre at the Banquet of the Empire." He died that Ireland might not be the spectre at the Peace Conference of Nations.

His last thoughts were with Ireland, and in each letter of farewell written to friends from the battlefield, he protests that he died in her holy cause. His soldier servant, writing home to me, says that on the eve of the battle the officers were served with pieces of green cloth to be stitched on the back of their uniforms, indicating that they belonged to the Irish Brigade. Tom touched his lovingly, saying: "Boy, I am proud to die for it!" Ireland,

Christianity, Europe—that was what he died for. "He carried his pack for Ireland and Europe. Now pack-carrying is over. He has held the line." Or, as he says in his last poem to his little daughter, he died—

> "Not for flag, nor King, nor Emperor,
> But for a dream born in a herdsman's shed,
> And for the secret scripture of the poor."

That was the dream that haunted his soul, that impelled him to the last sacrifice, and what a sacrifice! What he gave, he gave well—all his gifts, his passionate freedom-loving heart, his "winged and ravening intellect," intimate ties of home and friendship and motherland, his career, and better than career—the chance of fulfilling his hopes for Ireland—he sacrificed all that "makes life a great and beautiful adventure." And now that he has died . . . "in the waste and the wreckage paying the price of the dreams that cannot sleep," let not anyone commit that last treachery of travestying his ideals and aspirations.

In his final letter to his brother, written the day before he was killed, he outlined the things for which, had he lived, he would have worked—

"If I live I mean to spend the rest of my life working for perpetual peace. I have seen war, and faced modern artillery, and I know what an outrage it is against simple men."

And in another letter, written to me some weeks

before he entered the battle of the Somme, he speaks of this mission even more poignantly—

"I want to live, too, to use all my powers of thinking, writing and working, to drive out of civilisation this foul thing called War and to put in its place understanding and comradeship." This note, indeed, rings through all his letters like a pleading. "If God spares me, I shall accept it as a special mission to preach love and peace for the rest of my life."

It is this that makes his sacrifice doubly great, that he, realising with all the wealth of his abundant imagination the horror and cruelty and outrage of war, should step deliberately from the sheltered ways of peace and security and take his share "in the grim and awful job" because "it was only a hell of suffering but not of dishonour, and through it, over its flaming coals, Justice must walk, were it on bare feet."

Prussia was to him the enemy of peace and civilisation. In almost his last letter, he again emphasises this.

"Unless you hate war, as such, you cannot really hate Prussia. If you admit war as an essential part of civilisation, then what you are hating is merely Prussian efficiency."

And with this mission of universal peace mingled his dream of a reconciled Ulster. He knew that there was no abiding cause of disunion between North and South, and hoped that out of

common dangers shared and suffering endured on a European battleground, there would issue a United Ireland. For this he counted much on "the brotherhood that binds the brave of all the earth." "There is a vision of Ireland," he wrote in 1915, "better than that which sees in it only a cockpit, or eternal skull-cracking Donnybrook Fair—a vision that sees the real enemies of the nation to be ignorance, poverty, disease; and turning away from the ashes of dead hatreds, sets out to accomplish the defeat of these real enemies. Out of this disastrous war, we may pluck, as France and Belgium have plucked, the precious gift of national unity."

In one of my letters he writes—

"One duty does indeed lie before me, that of devoting myself to the working out of a reconciliation between Ulster and Ireland. I feel God speaking to our hearts in that sense out of this terrible war."

In his Political Testament he makes a dying plea for the realisation of his dream.

"Had I lived I had meant to call my next book on the relations of Ireland and England: *The Two Fools: A Tragedy of Errors.* It has needed all the folly of England and all the folly of Ireland to produce the situation in which our unhappy country is now involved.

"I have mixed much with Englishmen and with Protestant Ulstermen, and I know that there is no

real or abiding reason for the gulfs, salter than the sea, that now dismember the natural alliance of both of them with us Irish Nationalists. It needs only a Fiat Lux, of a kind very easily compassed, to replace the unnatural by the natural.

"In the name, and by the seal of the blood given in the last two years, I ask for Colonial Home Rule for Ireland—a thing essential in itself and essential as a prologue to the reconstruction of the Empire. Ulster will agree.

"And I ask for the immediate withdrawal of martial law in Ireland, and an amnesty for all Sinn Fein prisoners. If this war has taught us anything it is that great things can be done only in a great way."

As a writer in the *Freeman* very truly says—

"If Tom Kettle could have asked for a gift in return for his great sacrifice, it would have been that a great peace unite the hearts and strivings of all those of his fellow-countrymen who worked for the only land he loved."

Mr. Leslie interpreted his vision exquisitely—

"He did not resent the littleness that had dogged his life and left him lonely at the end—but he looked back and hated the pettiness and meanness which had injured Ireland—which had taken every advantage of Ireland, which had fooled her leaders and shuffled off her children on feeble promises. He asked for that touch of greatness

by which alone great things are achieved. Like a thousand ardent spirits in Ireland at the time, he was ready to leap to a new era by the bridge of great things greatly done, even if the bridge was to be the bridge of death. English statesmen offered them a bridge of paper and an insecure footing at that, but many rushed forward, hopeful of the future. Others turned bitterly back. All who died, whether they died in Ireland or France, died bitterly.

"Disappointed but undismayed Kettle stood with nought but a mystic's dream between himself and the Great Horror. He felt afraid for Ireland, but not for himself. Then the irony of his life and the bitterness of his death must have come home to him . . . stripped of all, his career, his ambitions, his friends and lovers, with his back turned to Ireland and his heart turned against England he threw himself over the mighty Gulf, where at least he could be sure that all things good or evil were on the great scale his soul had always required. With earth's littleness he was done."

He wished, too, to live to chronicle the deeds of his beloved Dublin Fusiliers. There is no more generous praise ever given to men than that he gave his Dubliners—unless, perhaps, their praise of him. In his last letter to his brother, on the eve of death, he says—

"I have never seen anything in my life so beautiful as the clean and so to say radiant valour of my

Dublin Fusiliers. There is something divine in men like that."

Again in a letter to a friend—

"We are moving up to-night into the battle of the Somme. The bombardment, destruction and bloodshed are beyond all imagination, nor did I ever think the valour of simple men could be quite as beautiful as that of my Dublin Fusiliers. I have had two chances of leaving them—one on sick leave and one to take a staff job. I have chosen to stay with my comrades."

In a letter written to me shortly after going out, he writes out of his great, generous heart: "What impresses and moves me above all, is the amazing faith, patience and courage of the men. To me it is not a sort of looking-down-on but rather a looking-up-to appreciation of them. I pray and pray and am afraid, but they go quietly and heroically on. God make me less inferior to them."

That is the essence of Tom Kettle, his noble and humble appraisement of a gift which he possessed *par excellence* himself. And I think he found happiness and peace of heart with those loyal, valorous men whose comrade he was and whose risks he shared. They too, I think, knew and loved the greatness of him, and found in his genius, his radiant simplicity and high courage, their example and inspiration.

Thomas M. Kettle was the third son of Andrew

J. Kettle, and of Margaret MacCourt. He was born at Artane, Co. Dublin, in 1880. From his father, the great land reformer who did more than any other to emancipate Irish farmers from the crushing yoke of landlordism, Tom Kettle inherited his political principles. He might be said to have "lisped" in politics. From his father, too, he inherited that courage, moral as well as physical, that fearless outspoken way he had of enunciating his beliefs and ideas. He was intensely proud of his father and always loved, in later years, when the old man was confined indoors, to drive out to his country home to thresh out current politics with him. Though apparently they seldom came to agreement, still it was obvious that each radiated pride in the other.

Tom Kettle lived in the country till he was twelve, and the quiet charm and peace of the land cast a spell on him that held him always. He hungered to go back, to quit politics and platforms, and in a picturesque cottage cultivate literature and crops. It was a dream he would never have realised—he was born to be in the thick of things —but it was constantly before him like a mirage.

In one of his last letters he recurs to it—

"We are going to live in the country, and I am going to grow early potatoes. I am also going to work very hard and make very few speeches."

He was educated first at the Christian Brothers' school in Richmond Street, Dublin. In 1894 he

went to Clongowes Wood College. He had a brilliant Intermediate career, obtaining First Place in the Senior Grade with many medals and distinctions. There is a story told that this year when his great success was a matter of public comment, his father's only remark was, "I see you failed in Book-keeping." It might strike as harsh those who did not know Mr. Kettle, but it was not really intended as such, it was meant rather to check vanity and a possible swelled head. To Tom, it was exquisitely humorous, and he loved the upright, somewhat stern old man none the less for his seeming lack of appreciation.

In 1897 he went to University College. In a year or so, he became Auditor of the Literary and Historical Society and obtained the Gold Medal for Oratory. His great gifts were already conspicuous. A fellow-student wrote of him: "Amongst them all, Kettle stood supreme. Already that facility for grasping a complicated subject and condensing it in a happy phrase, that bright, eager mind so ready to take issue on behalf of a good cause, that intellectual supremacy which was so pre-eminently his, had marked him out for far-reaching influence and a distinguished career."

His University course was interrupted by a breakdown in health which necessitated his withdrawal from collegiate life for nearly a year. Over-study had strained his nervous system, and he never quite regained normal health. In 1904

a brother, a veritable twin-soul, to whom he was deeply attached, and of whom he had high hopes, died. This was an everlasting grief to him. This sorrow, together with his shattered nerves, was responsible for his somewhat tragic and melancholy temperament. In 1904 he went to the Tyrol to recuperate, and in that wander-year, Europe laid her spell on him. He was a fine linguist and, being an omnivorous reader, was soon intimately acquainted with the best European literature.

His journalistic talent was displayed as Editor of *St. Stephen's,* 1903-4, a spasmodically produced college magazine which he described in a long-remembered phrase as "unprejudiced as to date of issue."

In 1902 he had entered the King's Inns as a Law student. Of this period, a friend writes: "At the students' dinners Kettle was cordially welcomed, and though very young in those days, still at no time and in no place did rich humour and rare conversational power show to more advantage. The company one meets at Law students' dinners is varied to a degree, boys in their 'teens sitting at table with men of middle age and over on even terms. Struggling poverty sits cheek by jowl with good salary and wealth. On one occasion when Kettle was dining, one of the men present was a very well-to-do business man of about fifty. This gentleman was holding forth very earnestly on the rights of property and the amount of violence a

householder is entitled to display towards a burglar. Kettle suddenly startled him with the query: 'Have you ever considered this question from the point of view of the burglar?' The magnate was horrified and hastily withdrew."

That story is typical of him. His term at King's Inns concluded with his securing a Victoria Prize, and he was called to the Bar in 1905. With his oratorical gifts and passionate delivery, a brilliant career was foretold. A writer in the *Irish Law Times* says: "He did everything that came his way with distinction. . . . There was a freshness and vigour about his style and a rare eloquence in his language which satisfied everyone that he would be an instant success if he was going to make law his profession." Personally, I think he would never have been happy as a lawyer. He was too sensitive. I remember his defending a criminal who was convicted and sentenced to penal servitude. The conviction worried him greatly. He used to say that it was a fearful responsibility to plead for a man and think that perhaps had another lawyer been chosen there would be no conviction. That the man was guilty mattered nothing to him. He went on the principle that the innocent are those who are not found out.

> "Everywhere the word is man and woman;
> Everywhere the old sad sins find room."

He looked at the Law Courts and their victims,

not with the eyes of a modern lawyer who seems as if a spiritual blotting-pad had been applied, draining him of all emotion—he looked rather with the eyes of a metaphysician. In *The Day's Burden,* he wrote: "One does feel intensely that these legal forms and moulds are too narrow and too nicely definite, too blank to psychology to contain the passionate chaos of life that is poured into them." He was at once judge and jury, prisoner and counsel. He had that uncanny gift of seeing everybody's point of view with equal intensity of vision. Such a gift makes for a very lovable personality, but a lawyer should only see the point of view for which he is briefed.

When the opportunity offered he forsook the Law. In 1904 he was first President of the "Young Ireland Branch" of the United Irish League. In 1905 came his brief editorship of the *Nationist.* These two events were the stepping-stones to his political career, and it was upon them that he came to the notice of the public. The *Nationist* — a name he coined — was a weekly journal. He was editor for three months of its six months' life. If its career was brief, it was brilliant. It was, perhaps, the most courageous of Irish papers—and what is more, courageous in consummate prose. He thoroughly enjoyed this period of journalistic activity. He was allowed rather a free hand by the proprietors, and it was a keen joy to him to exercise his powers in the en-

deavour to educate the young Nationalist mind. Finally, however, he was deemed too outspoken, and he left the editor's chair with regret.

"If one had taken the precaution to have a father who had accumulated sufficient wealth," he wrote once, "to allow his sons the caviare of candour, nothing would be more entertaining than starting a paper."

In 1906 an opportunity was offered to him of entering Parliament. It was his chance, but it was a fighting chance. After the most strenuous of fights, he was returned as Parliamentary representative for East Tyrone. His majority was only sixteen, and it may be fairly said that only he could have won and held that seat in the Nationalist interest.

In the autumn of 1906 he went with Mr. Hazleton to America on a Home Rule Mission. His oratorical gifts were much appreciated there, and his six months' tour of the States was a fine experience, if a physically trying one. He liked America, with her love of freedom and her genial, hospitable ways, and always hoped again to "cross the pond."

I remember a few sayings which he brought back from America which he regarded as typical of American humour—such as "I don't know where I am going, but I am on my way," and "We trust in God; all others pay cash."

In 1908 he translated M. Dubois' *Contemporary*

Ireland, and wrote an introduction, which established his literary reputation.

At the general election in 1910 my husband increased his majority of sixteen to one of one hundred and eighteen. Mr. Shane Leslie, who gave him valuable help in this election, wrote thus—

"Kettle was the most delightful of platform speakers, and his witticisms and lyrical turns of speech made the election one long intellectual treat. He could turn over weighty questions of economics or of international policy with an ease that struck home to the peasant mind. . . . At one spot, I remember, he was greeted by a poverty-stricken populace, who had improvised a mountain band and crude home-made torches of turf and paraffin. Kettle immediately said: 'Friends, you have met us with God's two best gifts to man—fire and music.' It was as instantaneous as graceful." Having had such a hard fight, he loved his constituency as if it were a human thing. The issues fought in East Tyrone, as in all northern constituencies, were not the issues raised in ordinary Nationalist politics. In the North, religion is the predominant colour; it is the Catholic Green against the Protestant Orange. I say guardedly, predominant; of course there is the great issue—Home Rule *v.* Unionism. But the conspicuous place religion took struck a Dubliner as something quite extraordinary. I remember one amusing incident of the election, which my husband often cited as

typical. Our motor-car broke down, and while repairs were in progress a small boy was an interested spectator. When all was in order again and we were about to start, the boy looked wistfully as us—at least as wistfully as a northern boy can: they are not demonstrative except on the Twelfth of July. My husband interpreting the look, invited him for a drive. He accepted, and as my husband set him down after his spin the boy lifted his cap and said: "Thank you, Mr. Kettle, I am much obliged. To hell with the Pope!" and walked sedately away. It was surely a spirited and quaint declaration of independence and incorruptibility.

Another incident, too, stands out. The night the poll was declared there was wild enthusiasm in Tyrone. As Mr. Leslie says, "there was a green rash." My husband had promised that if he won, he would address a meeting at Cookstown. To get there it was necessary to pass through an Orange hamlet; as feeling was high and the hour late, it was deemed imprudent for us to go, but my husband insisted. We were about to start in a motor when one supporter, who had done his best to detain us, said very lugubriously: "Well, you have a terrible road before you." "What's the matter with it?" questioned the chauffeur anxiously. He was a Dublin man and quite ignorant of local politics. "Is it full of hills?" "No," replied the other in a tone of grave warning; "full of Protestants."

My husband's opponent in this last election was Mr. Saunderson, who based his claims chiefly on the fact that he was the son of the late Colonel Saunderson. "Mr. Saunderson," said my husband, "has protested so often that he is the son of Colonel Saunderson, that I, for my part, am inclined to believe him"—a touch of ridicule that went home with an Irish audience.

He was impatient of bigotry and narrowness and any attempt to stir up in Ulster the ashes of old hatreds and animosities. Once appealing to Ulstermen to forego their enthusiasm for William of Orange, he said with effect: "Why let us quarrel over a dead Dutchman?" His famous reply to Kipling, who by his doggerel tried to fan the flames of civil war, is worth quoting—

> "The poet, for a coin,
> Hands to the gabbling rout
> A bucketful of Boyne
> To put the sunrise out."

In Parliament, he was an instant success. He was a born orator and spoke with all the intensity that passionate conviction lends. In his book on *Irish Orators,* he wrote: "Without knowledge, sincerity, and a hearty spiritual commitment to public causes, the crown of oratory, such as it is, is not to be won." He had those requisites abundantly. In this book he gives a definition of an orator than which nothing could be finer: "The

sound and rumour of great multitudes, passions hot as ginger in the mouth, torches, tumultuous comings and goings, and, riding through the whirlwind of it all, a personality, with something about him of the prophet, something of the actor, a touch of the charlatan, crying out not so much with his own voice as with that of the multitude, establishing with a gesture, refuting with a glance, stirring ecstasies of hatred and affection—is not that a common, and far from fantastic, conception of the orator?"

An appreciation of him containing reminiscences of two speeches in the House may not be deemed amiss here: "Wit and humour, denunciation and appeal came from him not merely fluently but always with effect. Tall and slight, with his soft boyish face and luminous eyes, he soon startled and then compelled the attention of the House by his peculiar irresistible sparkle and his luminous argument. Two pictures of him in that period survive. The first was on the occasion of the second reading of one of the numerous Women's Suffrage Bills. 'Mr. Speaker,' he said in his rich Dublin accent and almost drawling intonation, 'they say that if we admit women here as members, the House will lose in mental power.' He flung a finger round the packed benches: 'Mr. Speaker,' he continued, 'it is impossible.' The House roared with laughter. 'They tell me also that the House will suffer in morals. Mr. Speaker,

I don't believe that is possible either.' The applause rang out again at this double hit. . . . I remember him again in the House on a hot night in June. A dull debate on Foreign Affairs was in progress. The recent travels of Mr. Roosevelt through Egypt and his lecture to England at the Guildhall reception were under discussion. Kettle let loose upon the famous Teddy the barbed irony of his wit. I recall only one of his biting phrases: 'This new Tartarin of Tarascon who has come from America to shoot lions and lecture Empires."

Another distinguished critic writing of him says: "His darting phrases made straight for the heart of unintelligence—sometimes also, no doubt, for the heart of intelligence. When he sat in Parliament he summed up the frailty of Mr. Balfour in yielding to the Tariff Reformers in the phrase: 'They have nailed their leader to the mast.'"

He could be caustic to a degree. "I don't mind loquacity," he once remarked, "so long as it is not Belloc-quacity."

"Mr. Long," he said another time, "knows a sentence should have a beginning, but he quite forgets it should also have an end."

In a flashing epigram he once summed up the difference between the two great English Parties: "When in office, the Liberals forget their principles and the Tories remember their friends. Asked once to define a Jingo, he replied: "A Jingo

is a man who pays for one seat in a tram-car and occupies two."

This was, I think, the happiest period of his public life. Some have maintained that he should never have entered Parliament—that in doing so "he to Party gave up what was meant for mankind." To me, looking back, it seems not his going in, but his coming out of Parliament, that was wrong. He was pre-eminently suited to the life. His gifts ensured him success in the House, and his avid intellect made every debate a subject of interest to him. In London political and journalistic life he found his level. He was in touch with the current of European life. Dublin he felt, after London, a backwater, for, owing to the destruction of the national life, there is no intellectual centre. Not that he would have endured living in London. He loved too much for that his Dublin, "the grey and laughing capital." A quotation from *The Day's Burden* explains at once his liking for the tonic experience and stimulus of a foreign city and his *nostalgia* for home. "A dead Frenchman, a cynic as they say, one Brizeux, murmurs to himself in one of his comedies as I murmur to myself every time I leave Ireland: 'Do not cry out against *la patrie*. Your native land, after all, will give you the two most exquisite pleasures of your life, that of leaving her and that of coming back.'"

In 1909, the year of our marriage, he was

appointed Professor of National Economics in the National University. In 1910 he resigned his seat in Parliament, as he found it impossible to combine the duties of Professor and Member. It was a whole-time professorship and, further, the subject was almost a unique one, and had practically no text-books. It was therefore necessary for him to devote all his energies, for some years at any rate, to his work in the University. This he did whole-heartedly, as Economics had always attracted him; he regarded it as one of the most important branches of study in the University. He thought that Ireland was in special need of trained economists. In his own words, he set himself to "formulate an economic idea fitted to express the self-realisation of a nation which is resolute to realise itself." He did not wish either that Economics should be regarded as a dismal science. Writing of Geography, he says, "Geography is a prudent science, but one day she will take risks—even the risk of being interesting." That risk Economics, in his keeping, certainly adventured. "The Science of Economics is commonly held to be lamentably arid and dismal. If that is your experience blame the Economists, for the slice of life with which Economics has to deal vibrates and, so to say, bleeds with actuality. All science, all exploration, all history in its material factors, the whole epic of man's effort to subdue the earth

and establish himself on it, fall within the domain of the Economist."

As in every sphere of activity which he entered, he assumed his duties in the College with eager enthusiasm, and was very proud of being identified from the first with the National University.

But if my husband ceased to be a Member of Parliament, it does not mean that he became merely a Professor. He was a leading spirit in every live movement, and by speech and article kept in the political current. When the great labour strike occurred in Dublin in 1913, he was chairman of the Peace Committee which endeavoured to establish better feeling between the employers and employees. He was also a member of the Education Commission appointed by Mr. Birrell to enquire into the grievances of Irish teachers.

As for his work in literature in 1910, he published a volume of essays entitled *The Day's Burden,* the best known and most characteristic of his writings.

In 1911 he wrote a pamphlet on *Home Rule Finance,* and in the same year he translated and edited Luther Kneller's *Christianity and the Leaders of Modern Science.*

In 1911 he also edited and wrote a brilliant introduction to M. Halévy's *Life of Nietzsche,* translated by Mr. Hone.

In 1912 he wrote *The Open Secret of Ireland,*

putting the case of Ireland in his own inimitable way.

In 1912 he was one of the first prominent men identified with the foundation of the National Volunteers. A passage taken from an article written for the *Daily News* on the Volunteers has now a poignant interest—

"The impulse behind the new departure is not that of the swashbuckler or the fire-eater. Ancient Pistol has no share in it. In no country is the red barbarism of war as a solvent of differences more fully recognised than in Ireland. In no other is the wastage of the public substance on vast armaments more strongly condemned on grounds alike of conscience and intelligence. If Ireland has a distinguished military tradition, she has another tradition to which she holds more proudly, that of peace and culture. In her golden age she, unique in Europe, wrought out the ideal of the civilisation-state as contrasted with the brute-force state. She never oppressed or sought to destroy another nation. What she proposes to herself now is not to browbeat or dragoon or diminish by violence the civil or religious liberty of any man—but simply to safeguard her own."

It is this man who speaks thus proudly of Ireland's noble tradition of peace and culture, this man to whom war was "red barbarism," who found it necessary to quit his own assured path "of peace and culture" and, with only the qualifica-

tion of courage, assume the profession of a soldier.

In 1914 he edited a book on *Irish Orators and Irish Oratory*. Many have held his introduction to this his finest piece of writing.

When the war broke out he was engaged in Belgium buying rifles for the Volunteers. In August and September, 1914, he was war correspondent for the *Daily News* in Belgium. I shall quote just one passage which briefly sums up his attitude—an attitude which I have already endeavoured to explain, as far as explanation is necessary. "When this great war fell on Europe, those who knew even a little of current ethical and political ideas felt that the hour of Destiny had sounded. Europe had once more been threatened by Barbarism, Odin had thrown down his last challenge to Christ. To you, these may or may not seem mere phrases: to anyone whose duty has imposed on him some knowledge of Prussia, they are realities as true as the foul of Hell. When the most fully guaranteed and most sacred treaty in Europe—that which protected Belgium—was violated by Germany, when the frontier was crossed and the guns opened on Liége, without hesitation we declared that the lot of Ireland was on the side of the Allies. As the wave of infamy swept further and further over the plains of Belgium and France, we felt it was the duty of those who could do so to pass from words to deeds."

"To Odin's challenge, we cried Amen!
We stayed the plough and laid by the pen,
And we shouldered our guns like gentlemen
That the wiser weak might hold."

In November, 1914, he joined, as he called it, the "Army of Freedom." His oratorical gifts and prestige as a Nationalist made him a great asset to the recruiting committee. It is said he made over two hundred speeches throughout Ireland. "He spent himself tirelessly on the task," writes a contributor to a Unionist paper. "His brilliant speeches were the admiration of all who heard them. To him, they were a heavy duty. 'The absentee Irishman to-day,' he said in a fine epigram, 'is the man who stays at home.' All the time he was on these spell-binding missions, he was chafing to be at the front. His happy and fighting nature delighted in the rough-and-tumble of platform work, and in the interruption of the 'voice' and hot thrust of retort. I remember him telling me of an Australian minor poet who was too proud to fight. The poet was arguing that men of letters should stay at home and cultivate the muses and hand on the torch of culture to the future. 'I would rather be a tenth-rate minor poet,' he said, 'than a great soldier.' Kettle's retort on this occasion was deadly. 'Well,' he said, 'aren't you?' "

He went to the front with a burdened heart. The murder of his brother-in-law, Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, cast a deep gloom on his spirit. As he

wrote to his friend Mr. Lynd shortly before his death, it "oppressed him with horror." I do not think it out of place to recall here a brief obituary notice he wrote of Mr. Sheehy-Skeffington, whom he loved, as Mr. Lynd so truly says, for the "uncompromising and radically gentle idealist he was"—

"It would be difficult at any time to convey in the deadness of language an adequate sense of the courage, vitality, superabundant faith, and self-ignoring manliness which were the characteristic things we associated with Francis Sheehy-Skeffington. To me, writing amidst the rumour of camps, the task is impossible. There are clouds that will never lift.

"He was to me the good comrade of many hopes, and though the ways of this scurvy and disastrous world led us apart, he remained to me an inextinguishable flame. This 'agitator,' this 'public menace,' this 'disturber' was wholly emancipated from egotism, and incapable of personal hatred. He was a man who had ranged the whole world of ideas, and rather than my own words I would use those of the great whom we agreed in admiring. I could style him with Guyau—

> 'Droit comme un rayon de lumière,
> Et, comme lui, vibrant et chaud;—'

or put in his mouth the proud and humble faith of Robert Buchanan—

'Never to bow or kneel
To any brazen lie;
To love the worst, to feel
The worst is even as I.
To count all triumph vain
That helps no burdened man;
I think so still and so
I end as I began.'

"But in truth there is no phrase of any of his torchbearers that does not win new life from association with him. Strangest of all, he, who turned away from soldiers, left to all soldiers an example of courage in death to which there are not many parallels. This brave and honourable man died to the rattle of musketry; his name will be recalled to the ruffle of drums."

Easter week, too, had been for him a harrowing and terrible experience. MacDonagh, who was shot, was a fellow-professor at the College, as was also MacNeill, in whose favour he gave evidence at the court-martial. Pearse, the leader, was a friend of many years. With the rebellion he had no sympathy—indeed it made him furious. He used to say bitterly that they had spoiled it all—spoiled his dream of a free united Ireland in a free Europe. But what really seared his heart was the fearful retribution that fell on the leaders of the rebellion. When Beaumarchais's play, *The Marriage of Figaro,* was produced, it created a furore. The author's cynical comment was that the only thing madder than the play was its success. So it

might be said that the only thing madder than the insurrection was the manner of its suppression. Two wrongs do not make a right, nor do two follies make common sense. We in Ireland had the right, if not the precedent, to expect as fair treatment as was meted out by Botha to rebels in South Africa. My husband felt after the disasters of Easter week more than ever committed to the attitude he had taken up. He brought pressure to bear that he might be sent immediately to the front. On the 14th of July, 1916, he sailed for France.

His comrades speak of his wonderful courage, endurance and buoyant spirits at the front. He was never out of cheer, though he had a curious prophetic feeling all through that he would die on the battlefield in France.

"Do not think of us as glum," he wrote to me in August. "Gaiety is a sort of courage, and my Company is the gayest of the Battalion." In a letter to a friend he again speaks of his happy mood and his deep love of France: "I myself am quite extraordinarily happy. If it should come my way to die, I shall sleep well in the France I always loved, and shall know that I have done something towards bringing to birth the Ireland one has dreamed of."

France he loved in truth. In this volume he refers to her "as the most interesting and logical of nations," and in *The Day's Burden* he says: "The Irish mind is moreover like the French—

'lucid, vigorous and positive,' though less methodical since it never had the happiness to undergo the Latin discipline. France and Ireland have been made to understand each other." France, too, knew and loved him. In a beautiful tribute to him in a French journal, *L'Opinion,* the writer says: "All parties bowed in sorrow over his grave, for in last analysis they were all Irish, and they knew that in losing him, whether he was friend or enemy, they had lost a true son of Ireland. A son of Ireland? He was more. He was Ireland! He had fought for all the aspirations of his race, for Independence, for Home Rule, for the Celtic Renaissance, for a United Ireland, for the eternal Cause of Humanity. . . . He died, a hero in the uniform of a British soldier, because he knew that the faults of a period or of a man should not prevail against the cause of right or liberty."

In a farewell letter to his close and honoured friend, Mr. Devlin, he shows that he had envisaged death and was ready: "As you know, the character of the fighting has changed; it is no longer a question of serving one's apprenticeship in a trench with intermittent bursts of leaving cover and pushing right on. It is Mons backwards with endless new obstacles to cross. Consequently our offensive must go on without break. This means, of course, the usual exaction in blood. You will have noticed by the papers how high the price is, and all Irish Regiments will continue to

have front places at the performances. So you see, even I have no particular certainty of coming back. I passed through, as everybody of sense does, a sharp agony of separation. If I were an English poet like that over-praised Rupert Brooke, I should call it, no doubt, the Gethsemane before the climb up the Windy Hill, but phrase-making seems now a very dead thing to me—but now it is almost over and I feel calm. . . . I hope to come back. If not, I believe that to sleep here in the France I have loved is no harsh fate, and that so passing out into the silence, I shall help towards the Irish settlement. Give my love to my colleagues—the Irish people have no need of it."

But the moral and physical strain on a man, bred as he was, was terrible, and in spite of his fine efforts at insouciance there is a note of *nostalgia.* "Physically I am having a heavy time. I am doing my best, but I see better men than me dropping out day by day and wonder if I shall ever have the luck or grace to come home." And again: "The heat is bad, as are the insects and rats, but the moral strain is positively terrible. It is not that I am not happy in a way—a poor way —but my heart does long for a chance to come home." And in another letter of farewell to a friend he says: "I am not happy to die, the sacrifice is over-great, but I am content." Some critics have hinted that he died in France because he had not the heart to live in Ireland. Some even went

so far as to suggest that he died in France because he knew he ought to have died in the G.P.O. in Dublin. I quote these letters—almost too intimate to quote—to show that he made the sacrifice, knowing and feeling that it was a sacrifice—he made it for his Ireland and his Europe. He came unscathed through the engagement before Guillemont. An officer, telling me of that, said he behaved splendidly, taking every risk and seemed withal to have a charmed life. They had a day to reorganise before attacking Ginchy. In his last letter to his brother, written on the 8th, he described the battle-scene and his mood. "I am calm and happy but desperately anxious to live. . . . The big guns are coughing and smacking their shells, which sound for all the world like overhead express trains, at anything from 10 to 100 per minute on this sector; the men are grubbing and an odd one is writing home. Somewhere the Choosers of the Slain are touching, as in our Norse story they used to touch, with invisible wands those who are to die."

On the midnight of the 8th they advanced to their position before Ginchy. A fellow-officer gave me a gruesome description of the march, saying: "The stench of the dead that covered the road was so awful that we both used foot-powder on our faces." On the 9th, within thirty yards of Ginchy, he met his death from a bullet from the Prussian Guards.

I quote here an account which a staff-officer from the front gave to the Press Association of his last days—

"Kettle was one of the finest officers we had with us. The men worshipped him, and would have followed him to the ends of the earth. He was an exceptionally brave and capable officer, who had always the interests of his men at heart. He was in the thick of the hard fighting in the Guillemont-Ginchy region. I saw him at various stages of the fighting. He was enjoying it like any veteran, though it cannot be denied that the trade of war, and the horrible business of killing one's fellows was distasteful to a man with his sensitive mind and kindly disposition. I know it was with the greatest reluctance that he discarded the Professor's gown for the soldier's uniform, but once the choice was made he threw himself into his new profession, because he believed he was serving Ireland and humanity by so doing.

"In the Guillemont fighting I caught a glimpse of him for a brief spell. He was in the thick of a hard struggle, which had for its object the dislodgment of the enemy from a redoubt they held close to the village. He was temporarily in command of the company, and he was directing operations with a coolness and daring that marked him out as a born leader of men. He seemed always to know what was the right thing to do, and he was always on the right spot to order the doing of the

right thing at the right moment. The men under his command on that occasion fought with a heroism worthy of their leader. They were assailed furiously on both flanks by the foe. They resisted all attempts to force them back, and at the right moment they pressed home a vigorous counter-attack that swept the enemy off the field.

"The next time I saw him his men were again in a tight corner. They were advancing against the strongest part of the enemy's position in that region. Kettle kept them together wonderfully in spite of the terrible ordeal they had to go through, and they carried the enemy's position in record time. It was in the hottest corner of the Ginchy fighting that he went down. He was leading his men with a gallantry and judgment that would almost certainly have won him official recognition had he lived, and may do so yet. His beloved Fusiliers were facing a deadly fire and were dashing forward irresistibly to grapple with the foe. Their ranks were smitten by a tempest of fire. Men went down right and left—some never to rise again. Kettle was among the latter. He dropped to earth and made an effort to get up. I think he must have been hit again. Anyhow, he collapsed completely. A wail of anguish went up from his men as soon as they saw that their officer was down. He turned to them and urged them forward to where the Huns were entrenched. They did not need his injunction. They swept

forward with a rush. With levelled bayonets they crashed into the foe. There was deadly work, indeed, and the Huns paid dearly for the loss of Kettle.

"When the battle was over his men came back to camp with sore hearts. They seemed to feel his loss more than that of any of the others. The men would talk of nothing else but the loss of their 'own Captain Tom,' and his brother officers were quite as sincere, if less effusive, in the display of their grief. His loss will be mourned by all ranks of the Brigade, for he was known outside his own particular battalion, and his place will be hard to fill either in the ranks of his battalion or in the hearts of his men."

Had he survived Ginchy, he would have been appointed Base Censor and been out of the danger zone. He had refused to take up his appointment till he had seen his comrades through; he wished also to give the lie to his enemies who had delighted to call him a "platform soldier." Had he survived Ginchy, even though he were covered with wounds and glory, would not the tongues of his revilers, who, he said, always spoke of him "with inverted commas in their voice," have waged their war of calumny again? But death is very convincing. As the *Freeman* said, "His victor's grave at Ginchy is their answer." He could have no more splendid epitaph than the official War Office announcement that he fell "at the

post of honour, leading his men in a victorious charge."

"It is not the death of the Professor nor of the soldier, nor of the politician, nor even of the poet and the essayist, that causes the heartache we feel," writes a comrade. "It is the loss of that rare, charming, wondrous personality summed up in those two simple words—Tom Kettle."

A friend once said of him that he was "infinitely lovable." His great gifts accompanied by a rare simplicity and charm of manner that broke down all social barriers, compelled affection. He was known to all as "Tom Kettle." To his men, he was "their own Captain Tom." Perhaps the greatest proof of his magnetic personality lies in the fact that all classes, the Unionist and Nationalist, the soldier, the Sinn Feiner, and, as the *Freeman* says, "those wearing the convict garb" of England, united in mourning his death and paying tribute to his memory.

The *Irish Times,* the opponent of all his political ideals, said: "As Irish Unionists we lay our wreath on the grave of a generous Nationalist, a brilliant Irishman, and a loyal soldier of the King."

"There was in his rich and versatile temperament," said the *Church of Ireland Gazette,* "nothing of that narrow, obscurantist spirit which is the curse of much of Irish Nationalism."

Ireland was his one splendid prejudice. In *The*

Open Secret of Ireland he wrote: "We came, we, the invaders,"—an allusion to his Norse ancestry —"to dominate and remained to serve. For Ireland has signed us with the oil and chrism of her human sacrament, and even though we should deny the faith with our lips, she would hold our hearts to the end." He had a radiant pride in the indomitable spirit of his country that, many times conquered, was always unconquered. "A people such as this is not to be exterminated. An ideal (that of National Autonomy) is not to be destroyed. Imitate in Ireland" (he counsels England) "your own wisdom in dealing with the Colonies, and the same policy will bear the same harvest. For justice given the Colonies gave you friendship, as for injustice stubbornly upheld, they had given you hatred. The analogy with Ireland is complete so far as the cards have been played. The same human elements are there, the same pride, the same anger, the same willingness to forget. Why then should the augury fail?" In his pamphlet on *Home Rule Finance* he says: "The Irish problem that is now knocking so peremptorily at the door of Westminster is a problem with a past, history is of its very essence and substance; the wave that breaks in suave music on the beach of to-day, has behind it the unspent impulse of fierce storms and vast upheavals. It is not wise, it is not even safe to handle the reorganisation of the political fabric of Ireland in the

same 'practical' fashion that you would handle the reconstruction of an Oil Company. There is in liberty a certain tonic inspiration, there is in the national idea a deep fountain of courage and energy not to be figured out in dots and decimals; and unless you can call these psychological forces into action your Home Rule Bill will be only ink, paper and disappointment. In one word Home Rule must be a moral as well as a material liquidation of the past." His pride in Ireland forbade the insult of futile sympathy. "Tears, as we read in Wordsworth, to human suffering are due. If there be anyone with tears at command, he may shed them, with great fitness and no profit at all, over the long martyrdom of Ireland. But let him, at least if he values facts, think twice before he goes on to apply to her that other line which speaks of human hopes defeated and overthrown. No other people in the world has held so staunchly to its inner vision; none other has, with such fiery patience, repelled the hostility of circumstances, and in the end reshaped them after the desire of her heart. Hats off to success, gentlemen! Your modern god may well be troubled at the sight of this enigmatic Ireland which at once despises him and tumbles his faithfullest worshippers in the sand of their own amphitheatre. Yet, so it is. The confederate general, seeing victory suddenly snatched from his hands and not for the first time, by Meagher's Brigade, exclaimed in immortal

profanity, 'There comes that damned green flag again!' I have often commended that phrase to Englishmen as admirably expressive of the historical rôle and record of Ireland in British politics. The damned green flag flutters again in their eyes, and if they will but listen to the music that marches with it, they will find that the lamenting fifes are dominated wholly by the drums of victory." Ireland always moved him to lyric patriotism. His appeal not to rend "the seamless garment of Irish Nationality" is immortal. Mr. Lynd, whom I have quoted so frequently because he has understood my husband as it is given to few to understand another, calls the last lines of his "Reason in Rhyme" his testament to England as his call to Europeanism is his testament to Ireland.

"Bond from the toil of hate we may not cease:
Free, we are free to be your friend.
And when you make your banquet, and we come,
Soldier with equal soldier must we sit
Closing a battle, not forgetting it.
With not a name to hide
This mate and mother of valiant 'rebels' dead
Must come with all her history on her head.
We keep the past for pride:
No deepest peace shall strike our poets dumb:
No rawest squad of all Death's volunteers,
No rudest man who died
To tear your flag down in the bitter years
But shall have praise and three times thrice again
When at that table men shall drink with men."

"It was to the standard of the intellect in a gloomy world that he always gaily rallied," Mr. Lynd observes with truth. He saw the unbridgeable gulf which exists between aspiration and achievement. Heine once said bitterly: "You want to give the woman you love the sun, moon and stars, and all you can give her is a house on a terrace." He, like Heine, knew this sense of defeat, and it is this which made him regard "optimism as an attractive form of mental disease." As he says of Hamlet, "he passed through life annotating it with a gloss of melancholy speculation."

He felt the "weary weight of all this unintelligible world." "The twentieth century," he wrote in an article, "which cuts such a fine figure in encyclopædias is most familiarly known to the majority of its children as a new sort of headache." But he was a fighting pessimist that called for the best. "Impossibilism is a poor word and an unmanly doctrine. We have got to keep moving on and, since that is so, we had better put as good thought as we can into our itinerary. The task of civilisation was never easy. Freedom — the phrase belongs to Fichte or someone of his circle —has always been a battle and a march: it is of the nature of both that they should appear to the participants, during the heat of movement, as planless and chaotic."

Perhaps the finest definition of his philosophy of life may be found in an essay in *The Day's Burden.*

"A wise man soon grows disillusioned of disillusionment. The first lilac freshness of life will indeed never return. The graves are sealed, and no hand will open them to give us back dead comrades or dead dreams. As we look out on the burdened march of humanity, as we look in on the leashed but straining passions of our unpurified hearts, we can but bow our heads and accept the discipline of pessimism. Bricriu must have his hour as well as Cuchullin. But the cynical mood is one that can be resisted. Cynicism, however exercisable in literature, is in life the last treachery, the irredeemable defeat. . . . But we must continue loyal to the instinct which makes us hope much, we must believe in all the Utopias."

Pessimism is indeed written on his banner, but it is a pessimism which achieves. "Is not the whole Christian conception of life rooted in pessimism," he argues, "as becomes a philosophy expressive of a world in which the ideal can never quite overcome the crumbling incoherence of matter? May we not say of all good causes what Arnold said only of the proud and defeated Celts: 'They always went down to battle, but they always never fell'!"

There is no need to comment on him as a man of letters. A master of exquisite prose, he had in perfection what he himself calls "the incommunicable gift of phrase" and "the avid intellect which must needs think out of things everything to be

found in them." What he wrote of Anatole France, might fittingly be applied to himself. "A pessimism, stabbed and gashed with the radiance of epigrams as a thunder-cloud is stabbed by lightning is a type of spiritual life far from contemptible. A reasonable sadness, chastened by the music of consummate prose is an attitude and an achievement, that will help many men to bear with more resignation the burden of our century." His defence of the use of the epigram and its purpose is vigorous and arresting: "The epigrammatist, too, and the whole tribe of image-makers dwell under a disfavour far too austere. We must distinguish. There is in such images an earned and an unearned increment of applause. The sudden, vast, dazzling, and deep-shadowed view of traversed altitudes that breaks on the vision of a climber, who, after long effort, has reached the mountain-top, is not to be grudged him. And the image that closes up in a little room the infinite riches of an argument carefully pursued is not only legitimate but admirable."

His writings abound in fine images and epigrams which seem to come naturally to his pen. Galway is to him the "Bruges-la-Morte" of western Ireland; again "the opulent loneliness of the Golden Vale," is a picture in words. He referred to Irish emigrants as "landless men from a manless land"; England, he said, found Ireland a nation and left her a question. Loyalty he described as

the bloom on the face of freedom. Mr. Healy, whose wit he admired and whose politics he deplored, he called "a brilliant calamity." "It is with ideas," he wrote, "as with umbrellas, if left lying about they are peculiarly liable to change of ownership." Describing a man of poor parents who had achieved greatness, he said: "He was of humble origin like the violin string." A very stupid book, published one winter, he referred to "as very suitable for the Christmas fire." Of the Royal Irish Constabulary he said: "It was formerly an army of occupation. Now, owing to the all but complete disappearance of crime, it is an army of no occupation." Cleverness he defined as a sort of perfumed malice, the perfume predominating in literature, the malice in life. The inevitableness of Home Rule, he declared, resided in the fact that it is a biped among ideas. "It marches to triumph on two feet, an Irish and Imperial foot." And surely this is one of his finest epigrams: "Life is a cheap table d'hôte in a rather dirty restaurant, with time changing the plates before you have had enough of anything." Sufferers from the influenza will appreciate his description of that malady. "Other illnesses are positive, influenza is negative. It makes one an absentee from oneself." Talking of Mr. George Moore, he described him as "suffering from the sick imagination of the growing boy." The grazing system he declared must be exterminated root and branch, *brute and ranch.*

In his *Home Rule Finance,* he says: "Home Rule may be a divorce between two administrations, it will be a marriage between two nations. You are in any case free to choose for your inspiration between alimony and matrimony, the emphasis in either case is on the last syllable."

Few think of him as a poet, and yet his poetry has as unique and distinguished a *cachet* as his prose. In political poetry and battle song he equalled the best. His "Epitaph on the House of Lords" ranks beside Chesterton's memorable poem on the same subject. His battle song entitled "The Last Crusade" embodies in perfect lyric form his vision of the war—

"Then lift the flag of the last Crusade!
And fill the ranks of the Last Brigade!
March on to the fields where the world's re-made,
And the ancient Dreams come true!"

A sonnet written to his little daughter on the battlefield has been declared by a literary critic as sufficient to found the reputation of a poet.

"TO MY DAUGHTER BETTY, THE GIFT OF GOD.

"In wiser days, my darling rosebud, blown
To beauty proud as was your mother's prime,
In that desired, delayed, incredible time,
"You'll ask why I abandoned you, my own,
And the dear heart that was your baby throne,
To dice with death. And, oh! they'll give you rhyme
And reason: some will call the thing sublime,
And some decry it in a knowing tone.

So here, while the mad guns curse overhead,
And tired men sigh, with mud for couch and floor,
Know that we fools, now with the foolish dead,
Died not for flag, nor King, nor Emperor,
But for a dream, born in a herdsman's shed,
And for the secret Scripture of the poor.

"In the field, before Guillemont, Somme,
"September 4, 1916."

"Ballade Autumnal" is in Villon's perfect manner, and his replies to Kipling and Watson will be remembered in Ireland for all time. In a volume entitled *Poems and Parodies,* his verses have been collected and published.

Style in writing was a thing he regarded as of paramount importance. Though a prolific writer for newspapers, he was no believer in the theory of dashing off an article. On the contrary, he maintained that one of the drawbacks incidental to anything hastily written is that it is bound to be too serious. To write well, you must labour infinitely, otherwise one's work is sure to bear traces of what he called the "heavy paw." In the *Nationist,* when the slipshod work of some popular writer was being reviewed he observed, "At least *we* are stylists."

In the same degree as he loved the expert, he abhorred the quack, the charlatan, the pseudo-writer of prose or poetry. I remember one night a popular novelist and writer of magazine stories, who had achieved fame and money without achieving

literature, was telling with great unction of his success. He told how his recent book had been translated not only into French, Italian, Spanish, but even into a Dutch dialect. My husband, flicking the ash from a cigarette, said in a very urbane voice: "That is very interesting. I dare say then it will soon be translated into English."

In speaking, too, while his notes were scanty, in fact mere headings, he always thought out beforehand both the matter and form. As he put it, he favoured "carefully prepared impromptus."

Friends will remember him at his best as a conversationalist. As a raconteur he was inimitable, and, as a critic says, "It was not so much the point of his tale that counted. The divagations from the text in which he loved to indulge were the delight of his auditors." "What Doctor Johnson said of Burke," observes another critic, "was essentially true of Kettle, 'that you could not have stood under an archway in his company to escape a passing shower without realising that he was a great man.'"

He had the literary man's constitutional distaste for writing or answering letters. A friend once said chaffingly to him that he might write "The Life and Letters of T. M. Kettle." "Well," retorted Tom, "you may write my life, but there won't be any letters, for I never write any." He was also unpunctual in keeping appointments, and finding the telephone very useful, he said it should

be called not "telephone," but "tell-a-fib," as that was its chief function.

He was intensely Catholic and always flaunted the banner of his religion. "Religion," he writes in this volume, "is one of the ideal forces that make men good citizens and gallant soldiers." And again, "If soldiers will not fight on an empty stomach, still less will they fight on an empty soul." Perhaps because he loved his faith, so he could afford to take it humorously at times. I remember once his throwing off in an epigram the difference between the Catholic and Protestant religions. "The Catholics take their beliefs table d'hôte," he said, "and the Protestants theirs à la carte." What chiefly appealed to him in Catholicity was its mystery and its gospel of mercy. If he often quoted Heine's well-known semi-cynical "Dieu me pardonnera, c'est son métier," it was because he felt an amazed gratitude that a God should choose such an original profession. He greatly liked the society of Irish priests. He used to say they were gentlemen first, and priests after. They, too, loved him, and took his gentle chaff as it was meant. I remember how a priest friend of his enjoyed a sermon for golfers which Tom composed for him. Needless to say it was never preached. In it golfers were enjoined to "get out of the bunker of mortal sin with the niblick of Confession." During the Dublin strike an anti-cleric was railing against the priests, who had in-

tervened to prevent the deportation of the children. Tom completely won him over with the original argument "that the priests were acting as members of a spiritual trade union." Writing of the great Catholic poet, Francis Thompson, he puts in a lyric plea for his religion: "The superiority of the Catholic poet is that he reinforces the natural will by waters falling an infinite height from the infinite ocean of spirit. He has two worlds against one. If we place our Fortunate Islands solely within the walls of space and time, they will dissolve into a mocking dream; for there will always be pain that no wisdom can assuage. They must lie on the edge of the horizon with the glimmer of a strange sea about their shores and their mountain peaks hidden among the clouds." He had a wonderful spiritual humility. What he found admirable in Russian literature was "an immense and desolating sob of humility and self-reproach." He abjured the self-righteous who, he used to say, went round as if they were "live monuments erected by God in honour of the Ten Commandments." He was, indeed, over generous in the praise of qualities in others which he had superlatively himself. Anyone with a gift, a "plus" man at golf, a Feis Gold Medallist, an expert gardener—just the distinguishing *cachet* of excellence won his admiration. Witness how he lauds the valour of his Dublin Fusiliers, and yet his courage was no newly acquired virtue. I re-

member several years ago he went to a political meeting at Newcastle West. A faction party took possession of the platform. The intending speakers were for abandoning the meeting, but Tom declined to give in without at least a fight, and led the attack on the platform. After a nasty struggle they captured their objective. Mr. Gwynn, who was one of the speakers, was so impressed with my husband's daring that he wrote me his admiration, saying that he led the attack "with nothing but an umbrella and a University degree." His moral courage, too, never failed. When occasion demanded it, he could always be counted on to say " the dire full-throated thing."

For the memory of Parnell he had a deep reverence. This is his vision of him—

> "A flaming coal
> Lit at the stars and sent
> To burn the sin of patience from her soul,
> The Scandal of Content."

A life, or rather an impressionist study, of " the Chief's " career was a work he frequently projected but unfortunately never accomplished. The plinth at the back of Parnell's Statue in O'Connell Street should, he maintained, have been broken to symbolise the wrecking of Parnell's career. " Parnell," he wrote, " died with half his music in him." Once in a discussion on the eighties he remarked: " What is the history of the eighties? It is the

history of two Irishmen—Oscar Wilde and Parnell." For G. K. Chesterton my husband had a great admiration. In *The Open Secret of Ireland,* he refers to him as wielding "the wisest pen in contemporary English letters. There is in his mere sanity a touch of magic so potent that although incapable of dullness he has achieved authority, and although convinced that faith is more romantic than doubt or even sin, he has got himself published and read." The only flaw he found in Mr. Chesterton was that he was not a suffragist. My husband was, of course, an ardent supporter of the Women's Movement, and wrote a brilliant pamphlet entitled *Why Bully Women?* Mr. Chesterton paid him a noble tribute in the course of an article in the *Observer:* "The former case, that of the man of letters who becomes by strength of will a man of war, is better exemplified in a man like Professor Kettle, whose fall in battle ought to crush the slanderers of Ireland as the fall of a tower could crush nettles."

Another book projected but unachieved was on Dublin. His idea was to follow the method of E. V. Lucas in his *Wanderer in London.* For Dublin city he had a great love and pride: "Of no mean city am I," he often quoted proudly of his native city. For its poor he had a tremendous pity. The city beggars always found him an easy victim. I remember one night on coming out of a theatre, an urchin of about five years came clam-

ouring after him. I began the usual stunt on the parental iniquity that allowed youngsters to go out begging at eleven at night; but Tom, unheeding, was already chatting with the boy. "What's your name?" he asked. "Patsy Murphy, sir." "Well, Patsy, which would you rather, a shilling or a halfpenny?" "A halfpenny, sir," was the amazing reply. "Now tell me why?" questioned my husband, interested. "Well," said the kid, "I might get the halfpenny but I'd never get the shilling." His naïve philosophy got him both on this occasion.

In a speech on Dublin he said: "We cannot ignore the slums, for the slums are Dublin and Dublin is the slums." On the same occasion he remarked: "Dublin is in one respect like every other city. It is convinced that it possesses the most beautiful women and the worst corporation."

In a letter written from the boat on his way to France, with already a prophetic sense of death waiting for him on the battlefield, he wrote: "I have never felt my own essay 'On Saying Good-bye' more profoundly aux tréfonds de mon cœur."

I shall quote the conclusion of the essay—

"There is only one journey, as it seems to me . . . in which we attain our ideal of going away and going home at the same time. Death, normally encountered, has all the attractions of suicide without any of its horrors. The old woman" (an old woman previously mentioned who complained that

" the only bothersome thing about walking was that the miles began at the wrong end ")—" the old woman when she comes to that road will find the miles beginning at the right end. We shall all bid our first real adieu to those brother-jesters of ours. Time and Space: and though the handkerchiefs flutter, no lack of courage will have power to cheat or defeat us. ' However amusing the comedy may have been,' wrote Pascal, ' there is always blood in the fifth act. They scatter a little dust in your face; and then all is over, for ever.' Blood there may be, but blood does not necessarily mean tragedy. The wisdom of humility bids us pray that in that fifth act we may have good lines and a timely exit; but, fine or feeble, there is comfort in breaking the parting word into its two significant halves, à Dieu. Since life has been a constant slipping from one good-bye to another, why should we fear that sole good-bye which promises to cancel all its forerunners?"

Could one meet death in a nobler way? He had his last lines at Ginchy, and "his fine word and incomparable gesture." And now Picardy of the waving poplars—Picardy that my student days had garlanded with many memories, that shone in recollection with many friendships, now by the strange way of destiny holds my husband's grave. But he sleeps well in his beloved France, wearing the green emblem of his Motherland with his fallen comrades of the "Irish Brigade." As his

distant wind-swept grave in the Valley of the Somme rises to vision, some noble words of René Bazin recur to me making a picture: "The loyal land, the honest land, the land of love, now moist, now parched, where one sleeps the last sleep with the lullaby wind in the shade of the Cross." The many who loved him and now grieve for him will find in his own proud lines on Parnell a fitting message—

"Tears will betray all pride, but when ye mourn him,
Be it in soldier wise,
As for a captain who hath gently borne him,
And in the midnight dies . . .

So let him keep, where all world-wounds are healed,
The silences of God."

MARY S. KETTLE.

WHY IRELAND FOUGHT

I.—PRELUDE

WE have lived to see Europe—that Europe which carried the fortunes and the hopes of all mankind—degraded to a foul something which no image can so much as shadow forth. To a detached intelligence it must resemble nothing so much as a sort of malign middle term between a lunatic asylum and a butcher's stall.

We have seen committed, under our own amazed eyes, the greatest crime against civilisation of which civilisation itself keeps any record. The Blood-and-Ironmongers have entered into possession of the soul of humanity. No one who remembers our social miseries will say that that was a house swept and garnished, but it did seem secure against such an invasion of diabolism: that was an illusion, and it has perished. The face of things is changed, and all the streams are flowing up the hills and not down them. If in the old world it was the task of men to build, develop, redeem, integrate, carnage and destruction are now imposed upon us as the first conditions of human society. We are gripped in the ancient bloodiness of that paradox which bids us kill life in order to save life.

Nations are at war on land and sea, and under

and above both *usque ad cælum et infernum.* Millions of men have been marched to this Assize of Blood to be torn with shells and bullets, gutted with bayonets, tortured with vermin, to dig themselves into holes and grovel there in mud and fragments of the flesh of their comrades, to rot with disease, to go mad, and in the most merciful case to die.

Worse, if possible, is the malign transformation of the mind of mankind. Dr. Jekyll has been wholly submerged in Mr. Hyde. Killing has become an hourly commonplace—for the aggressor as the mere practice of his trade, for the assailed as a necessity of defence and victory. The material apparatus of butchery and destruction has proven to be far more tremendous in its effects than even its planners had imagined. The fabric of settled life has disappeared not by single houses, but by whole towns. Cathedrals are mere dust and shards of stained glass. Strong forts have all but vanished under the Thor's hammer of a single bombardment. The very earth, that a few months ago gave us food and iron and coal, is wealed, pitted, scarred, mounded, entrenched into the semblance of some devil's nightmare.

All this came upon a world which was more favourable to the hopes of honest, Christian men than any save the Golden Ages of fable. Being myself a plain, Christian man, I am not going to suggest that in 1914 the Earthly Paradise had ar-

rived or was in sight. Coventry Patmore is entirely right when he says that belief in the perfectibility of man on earth is the last proof of weakmindedness. If we fall to rise, it is also true that we rise to fall. It is, perhaps, the chief gain of the agony of war that men have come once more to recognise that in their proudest exaltations sin stands chuckling at their elbows; that moral evil is a reality, and that the opposite notion was a spider-web spun by German metaphysics out of its own entrails. But with these limitations the world before the war promised well for all reasonable human hopes. The old materialism was all but dead. It is true that a few antiquated German heresiarchs like Professor Haeckel still expounded a thing called Monism in sixpenny editions. It is true that a tribe of German professors were still engaged (with much aid and abetment from English savants and publishers in an attempt to shred into myth those plain historical documents, the Gospels. But on the whole the reigning philosophy was that of Bergson, a philosophy of life, Latin and lucid, which was a distinct return to St. Thomas Aquinas, to Aristotle, and to the common daylight. And in the region of Higher Criticism people were asking themselves very earnestly whether savants like Harnack and the rest, having regard to their general flat-footedness of apprehension, were likely to be good judges of any evidence of anything whatever, human or divine.

In the field of social problems the outlook was of the hopefullest. The conscience of men had been aroused more sharply than ever before to the mass of evil in our society which was inevitable only as a fruit of selfish apathy, and could be exterminated by sound knowledge and strong action. The very loud clamour of the indecently rich was in itself the best proof that the main cause had been bull's-eyed, and the best guarantee of approaching change. On the other hand the emptiness of the old Socialism, its inadequacy not only to the spiritual but to the bodily business of life, had emerged into clear vision. Property for every man, and not too much property for any man, had become the watchword of sensible men. Trusts, combines, and private conspiracies of every kind, economic and political, were growing more nervous and by consequence more honest under a growing acuteness of scrutiny. Conservatism, which, for all its faults, had kept the roots of life from being torn up, and Democracy, which, for all its, had been like the sap in the tree forcing itself out into new forms of life, were coming to understand that they were not enemies but allies. If you refused all change it was death; if you changed everything at once it was equally death.

There were, indeed, obvious blots. Men, and not irresponsible men, were playing with fire in these countries. The King's conference at Buckingham Palace was known to have failed just

twelve days before Armageddon. We were committed to the monstrous doctrine that only through the criminal madness of civil war could the political future of Ireland be settled. Women, or some women, were already at guerilla war with men, or with some men, and the failure to find a way out was a grave reproach to statesmanship. Perhaps our most damning defect of that vanished time before the war was our entire lack of the sense of proportion. All the little fishes of controversy talked like whales. The galled jade did not *wince,* it trumpeted and charged like a wounded bull-elephant. If you put another penny on the income tax the rich howled out in chorus that Dick Turpin had got himself into the Exchequer, that all industry would come to an end, that the stately homes of England would fall into decay, and that all capital would emigrate to Kamchatka. If a bilious works manager spoke crossly to a similarly indisposed Trade Union workman, there was grave danger that in a week we should have a national crisis and a national strike.

The scene has changed. There must be many a man who, looking out on the spectacle of blood and disaster which now passes for Europe, exclaims: "If I had only known!" There is many a home, deep in the mourning of this titanic tragedy, in which they sigh: "If we could only bring back that 1914 in which we were not wise!"

These are not vain regrets; they have the germ

of future wisdom. But they are not our immediate business. Enough for the present to remember that we were playing with unrealities while this crime of all history was being prepared.

All our civilisation of that time, however disturbed, had in it a principle of growth and reconciliation. The temper of these countries might have permitted inflammatory verbiage, and even scattered anarchical outbursts, but it would have revolted to sanity at the first actual shedding of blood.

And now every landmark has been submerged in an Atlantic of blood. There has been forced upon us a dispensation in which our very souls are steeped in blood. The horizon of the future, such horizon as is discernible, is visible only through a mist of blood. Now this was not a war demanded by the peoples of the world. It was not, like the Great Revolution, created by the universal uprising of oppressed men, to be marred and to pass over into murder, lust and tyranny. It was not like the old wars of religion. The sort of religion that tortures its enemies and puts them to death no longer flourishes under the standard of the Cross. It does flourish under that of the Crescent, as the corpses of eight hundred thousand slain Armenians terribly testify. There was indeed before the war one people in Europe, but only one, whose leaders preached war as a national duty and function. How far the militarism of his rulers had

penetrated to the common man in Germany must remain something of a question. Personally, I do not think that the peasant who knelt by the wayside crucifix in the Tyrol, or the comfortable, stout farmer in Bavaria or Würtemberg, or the miner in Westphalia, or any typical Rhinelander wanted to dip his hands in blood. He bore with rulers who did so want. In the rest of Europe the atmosphere was one of profound peace. That it was so in France even German witnesses testify.

It will be said that all such considerations are now empty, that we have experienced war and realise all that it means, and that it is the part of wisdom to banish such memories from the human imagination. This sort of plea is, indeed, likely to be popular; it has all the qualities of popularity—that is to say, it is feeble, edifying, and free from all the roughness of truth. But it is precisely the truth in all its roughness of which we stand in need. Our duty is not to banish the memories of war as we have experienced it, but to burn them in beyond effacement, every line and trait, every dot and detail. Civilised men, in the mass, have not yet begun to understand the baseness and the magnitude of this adventure in de-civilisation. There is no calculus of suffering that can sum up the agonies endured since the sentence of blood was daubed on the lintel of every cottage in Europe. The story of war is not yet realised because it has not yet been told; there has not been time for the

telling even to begin. It is the part of wisdom to see that it is not slurred over, but written and remembered.

We shall have the usual fluttered imputations of "rhetoric" and "extravagance," the usual "scientific historians" with their deprecating gesture, against "the introduction of feeling" into any narrative. Such people, I suppose, have their place in the world. This is a scientific age, and the function of science may be exhausted when it has counted the corpses on a battlefield, unless indeed it goes on to append an estimate of their manurial value. It can render both these accounts without admitting a hint of emotion into its voice. But to the conscience the killing of men remains the most terrible of all acts. A mutilated corpse not only overwhelms it with horror, but also suggests at once that there is a murderer somewhere on the earth who must be sought out and punished. Passion will break into the voice, and anger into the veins at such a confrontation, for to be above passion is to be below humanity. I have no apology, then, to make for any "emotional" phrase or sentence in this book. It is in the main a narrative of facts—verified by evidence which stands unshaken by criticism—but I confess that, being no more than human, I have slipped into the luxury of occasional indignation.

When I call this war a crime I use the word in its fullest and simplest sense, an evil act issuing

from the deliberate choice of certain human wills. There is a sort of pietism, hardly distinguishable from atheism, to which war appears as a sort of natural calamity, produced by overmastering external conditions. You will hear people of this school of thoughtlessness chattering away as if the earthquake of Lisbon, the cholera outbreak of 1839, and the war of 1914 all belonged to the same category of evil. But the first was plainly beyond the reach of human power; the second was an evil imposed from without which might have been nullified by a wise organisation of medical knowledge; and the third was, on the part of its authors, just as plainly a thing of deliberate human choice. Another type of mind, numerously represented, considers that it has settled everything philosophically when to war it has added the label "inevitable." Everything is apparently involved in a sort of gelatinous determinism; everybody is somewhat to blame for everything, and nobody is very definitely to blame for anything. According to this notion because Germany is rather big, and the British Empire, France, Russia, Italy, and Austria-Hungary are also rather big, and because they all manufacture goods and sell them, the fabric of civilisation is to blow up in minute fragments from time to time under the explosion of an "inevitable war." No casual connection is indicated. Before thought begins these two doctrines must be dismissed. War is not a calamity of nature, and

there are no "inevitable wars." Or rather the only war inevitable is a war against aggression, and aggression itself is never inevitable.

If any fault has ever been urged against Belgium it was that of a too great and apathetic complacency. The average Englishman — bating the unreal fever-frenzy regarding Ireland—so little planned attack on anyone that events have proved his complete unpreparedness, an unpreparedness common and creditable to all the Allies. Russia wanted no war, Italy wanted none, Serbia, ravaged with disease, wanted none. Yet suddenly there was launched upon us this abomination of desolation.

Who launched it? Who was guilty of this crime above all crimes? The author of it, whether a ruler, a junta, or a whole nation, comes before history stained with an infamy to which no language can reach. If his assassin's stroke is not beaten down into the dust it is all over with Europe and civilisation. Who, then, was the criminal? There is an invertebrate view according to which everybody is equally blameable and blameless for everything. The holders of this view have never gone quite so far as to take up the New Testament story, and argue that Judas Iscariot was a misunderstood man; but, were they logical, they would do so. Since they are not logical they must not be allowed to apply their mechanical and deterministic formula to the tragedy of world-history. No nation in this war is without a blot, and many blots on its

past, not even Ireland. Any people that claims complete worthiness to bear the sword and shield of justice is a people intoxicated with vanity. The participants in this struggle are, like the participants and witnesses in a murder-trial, human. That does not prevent a jury adjudging the supreme guilt of blood to that one of the many imperfect individuals on whom it lies.

The Great War was in its origin a Great Crime, and the documents are there to prove it. That is one advantage we possess formerly forbidden to public opinion. The Press and popular education have done much harm, but this solid good stands to their credit: they have made it impossible, as in old times, to order war in secret councils for motives undisclosed, or not disclosed till long after the events. Every belligerent Government has found itself under the necessity of issuing to the world diplomatic correspondence relating to the outbreak of the war. All the publications of the Powers engaged will be found in a single volume, *Collected Diplomatic Documents relating to the Outbreak of the European War* (E. Ponsonby, 1s. net). To that volume frequent reference will be made in these pages. One omission must be noted, a hiatus more significant and sinister than any printed evidence. The influence exercised by Berlin on Vienna must be, for the historian, the central pivot of all *ante-bellum* negotiations. But in neither of the books published by the Germanic Pow-

ers is there any real disclosure of what passed between Berlin and Vienna during that fateful period. Allegations of atrocities, too, no longer rest merely on the evidence of private persons. Formal Commissions, composed of lawyers and statesmen of international reputation, have sifted the whole mass of charges, eliminated hearsay, and committed themselves to a verdict that nothing can shake. That great prince of the Church, Cardinal Mercier, and his Bishops, have issued documents with every solemnity of form and occasion which in the early days of the struggle were not available. A whole library of comment, in which the ablest minds not only of the United Kingdom and France but also of the United States and Germany itself have collaborated in a reasoned examination of the issues at stake, is at our disposal.

The evidence in the whole case is indeed at once so clear and so voluminous that one might well have supposed any further survey of it to be superfluous. That is not so. It is a far from frequent experience to find a man in Ireland, even among those who assume to themselves a new leadership of opinion, who has made an honest study of documents within reach of all the world. You will still hear "intellectuals" explaining at length that they "don't believe the Germans committed any atrocities in Belgium." You will hear facile sneers at the notion that attacks of Great Powers on small nationalities had anything to do with the war. The

sooner the unworthiness of this familiar attitude is recognised by everybody in Ireland the better.

No man has the right to offer an opinion on any subject that is a matter of evidence until he has read the evidence. Upon anyone who has read it in this instance the twin *niaiseries* just cited make the impression merely of blank unreason. What would one make of a man, and a writer to boot, who began modern French history by dismissing the alleged existence of Napoleon with a shrug and a gibe? Or who "didn't believe" that there ever were evictions in Ireland? The parallel is exact. The evidence in proof of the first pair of propositions differs from that in proof of the second pair only in being fresher and more abundant. Going upon that evidence, any branch of which can be pursued in detail by any enquirer, I propose to establish this following argument.

This war originated in an attempt by Austria-Hungary, a large Empire, to destroy the independence of Serbia, a small nation.

It grew to its present dimensions because Germany, and under German pressure Austria-Hungary, rejected every proposal making for peace suggested by the present Allied Powers but especially by the United Kingdom through Sir Edward Grey.

Germany offered bribes to the United Kingdom, and to Belgium herself, to induce them to consent to a violation of the European treaty which pro-

tected Belgian independence and enforced Belgian neutrality.

Having broken like an armed burglar into Belgium, Germany was there guilty of a systematic campaign of murder, pillage, outrage, and destruction, justified, planned and ordered by her military and intellectual leaders. Such a campaign was inherent in her philosophy of politics, and of war. She stood for the gospel of force, and the sacrament of cruelty. To link with her in any wise a nation like Ireland that has always stood for spiritual freedom is an act of treason and blasphemy against our whole past.

The Allied Powers did not come into the war, and will not come before history, sinless. The past of both Great Britain and France was deeply stained with domination, that is to say, with Prussianism. Much of it was still apparent in some of their politics. But they had begun to cleanse themselves. The working out of the democratic formula would have in due course completed that process, and will complete it. Prussia, on the contrary, had adopted her vice as the highest virtue. Her philosophy did not correct her appetites, it canonised them. Therefore, speaking of main ideas, the triumph of Prussia must mean the triumph of force: the triumph of the Allies must mean the triumph of law.

In such a conflict to counsel Ireland to stand neutral in judgment, is as if one were to counsel

a Christian to stand neutral in judgment between Nero and St. Peter. To counsel her to stand neutral in action would have been to abandon all her old valour and decision, and to establish in their places the new cardinal virtues of comfort and cowardice. In such matters you cannot compromise. Neutrality is already a decision, a decision of adherence to the evil side. To trim is to betray. It will be an ill end of all our "idealistic" movements when their success so transforms the young men of this nation that in this world they shall be content to be neutral, and that nothing will offer them in the next save to be blown about by the winds.

Used with the wisdom which is sown in tears and blood, this tragedy of Europe may be and must be the prologue to the two reconciliations of which all statesmen have dreamed, the reconciliation of Protestant Ulster with Ireland, and the reconciliation of Ireland with Great Britain.

In this book—pieced together amid preoccupations of a very different kind—I have reprinted certain articles on various aspects of the war published in its earlier stages. I have done so not out of vanity, the reader may rest assured, but to repel an imputation. It has been charged against us who have taken our stand with the Allies that we were merely dancing to the tune of Imperialism, that our ideas came to us from London, that we hated Prussia and Prussianism not honestly but simply

to order. Our recruiting appeals have been twisted from their plain utterance and obvious meaning. Wordy young men, with no very notable public services to their record, have "stigmatised" (a word in which they delight) us all from Mr. Redmond down as renegades to Irish Nationalism. What we have said and done is to be remembered and is to rise up in judgment against us in the new Ireland that is coming. I do not know whether anybody else is pained or alarmed, but my withers are unwrung. Since I knew Prussian "culture" at close quarters I have loathed it, and written my loathing. The outbreak of war caught me in Belgium, where I was running arms for the National Volunteers, and on the 6th of August, 1914, I wrote from Brussels in the *Daily News* that it was a war of "civilisation against barbarians." I assisted for many overwhelming weeks at the agony of the valiant Belgian nation. I have written no word and spoken none that was not the word of an Irish Nationalist, who had been at the trouble of thinking for himself. Ireland was my centre of reference as it was that of Mr. Redmond, Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Dillon, and Mr. Devlin in their speeches, and of Mr. Hugh A. Law in his clear and noble pamphlet, *Why is Ireland at War?*

It is true that we have all made two assumptions. We assumed that Ireland had a duty not only to herself but to the world; we assumed further that, whatever befell, the path taken by her must be the

path of honour and justice. If these postulates are rejected there is no more to be said: the future must in that case undoubtedly belong to the friends of the burners of Louvain.

WHY IRELAND FOUGHT

II.—The Bullying of Serbia

The first declaration of war in this world-conflict was that of Austria-Hungary against Serbia on the 27th of July, 1914. The first shots fired in the war were those fired by Austrian monitors on the Danube into Belgrade on the 29th of July, 1914. Austria-Hungary is or was then a great Empire with a population of 50,000,000 and an army of 2,500,000; Serbia is or was then a peasant State with a population of 5,000,000 and an army of 230,000.

How these shots—heard alas! farther and more disastrously than that of Emerson's embattled farmers!—came to be fired is a plain story often told, and never disputed or disputable. It will be sufficient to recall the main features of it. On the 28th of June the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, heir to the Emperor Francis Joseph, and his wife were assassinated in Sarajevo, the capital of the province of Bosnia, annexed to Austria-Hungary in 1909. Any reader of the English or French papers of that time will remember the sincere and universal sympathy expressed for the old unhappy Emperor, and his ill-starred realm and family. It

was a crime that awakened horror throughout Europe. The annexation had been cynical, but crime is no cure for crime. In general character and consequences there is an historic act which presents remarkable resemblances to the Sarajevo outrage, I mean the Phœnix Park murders. In each case irresponsible men stained a good cause, and in each case an attempt was made to indict a nation. The assassins were arrested, Prinzip who had fired the fatal pistol-shots, and Cabinovitch who had thrown bombs. They were in the hands of the law, and exemplary justice might reasonably be expected. The seething pot of Balkan politics, said the average man in these countries, had boiled up once more in noxious scum. It was another tragic episode. And so people in the Entente countries turned back to their own troubles. How acute these troubles were we are now in danger of forgetting, but we have learned enough since then of the German political psychologist and his ways to conclude that they were a prime factor in subsequent decisions. The threat of civil war in "Ulster," an unprecedented crisis in the Army, gun-running, arming and drilling public and secret, a woman suffrage and a labour movement, both so far gone in violence as to be on the immediate edge of anarchy, left the Government of these countries little leisure for the politics of the Near East. France was in serious difficulties as regards her public finance, violent fiscal controversies were

impending, the Caillaux trial threatened to rival that of Dreyfus in releasing savage passions, the military unpreparedness of the country was notorious. Russia naturally stood far closer to Serbia, but labour riots in Petrograd, a revival of revolutionary activity, and widespread menace of internal disturbance seemed hopelessly to cripple her. Nothing could have been more remote from the desire of any of the Entente nations than a European war springing out of Sarajevo.

But there were other forces at work in the sinister drama. On the very morrow of the assassinations the Austro-Hungarian Press opened what Professor Denis well calls a systematic "expectoration of hatred" against Serbia—Prinzip and Cabinovitch were both Austrian, not Serbian subjects. The Serbian Government pressed the formal courtesy of grief so far as to postpone the national fêtes arranged in celebration of the battle of Kosovo. They had already warned the Austrian police of the Anarchist Associations of Cabinovitch, and now offered their help in bringing to justice any accomplices who might be traced within their jurisdiction. All this was of no avail. The Austro-Hungarian Red Book is not always discreet in its selections. Thus an incriminating passage from the *Pravda* runs (3rd July, 1914)—

"The Policy of Vienna is a cynical one. It exploits the death of the unfortunate couple for its abominable aims against the Serbian people."

The *Militärische Rundschau* demanded war (15th July)—

"At this moment the initiative rests with us: Russia is not ready, moral factors and right are on our side as well as might."

The *Neue Freie Presse* demands "war to the knife, and in the name of humanity the extermination of the cursed Serbian race."

The furious indictment of the whole Serbian nation continued in the Press of Vienna and Budapest, and found echoes even in that of these countries. The task was easy, for the ill repute, clinging to Serbian politicians since the murder of King Alexander and Queen Draga, had not been wholly banished by her later heroic deeds.

These journalistic outbursts and the protests of the Serbian Press, although unnoticed by the outside world, attracted, as was natural, the attention of diplomatists. But an interchange of barbed epithets across the Danube was no new thing, and the Austrian Foreign Office assumed an attitude of reassurance which deceived even Russia, and lulled the other Entente Powers into complete security (Serbian Book, No. 6, No. 12, No. 17). We now know that there were other observers less misled, such as M. D'Apchier le Mangin, who noted the massing of guns and munitions on the Serbian frontier as early as the 11th of July, and M. Jules Cambon, who had convinced himself by the 21st of July that Germany had set in train the prelimi-

naries to mobilisation. But nothing open or public (for the police proceedings against the assassins had been held *in camera*) had prepared the way for the Austrian *coup*. It was an amazed Europe that learned the terms of the Note presented at Belgrade by the Austrian Ambassador on the 23rd of July. There were no illusions as to its meaning and implications, for none were possible. Newspapers so little akin as the *Morning Post* and M. Clemenceau's *L'Homme Libre* characterised it in the same phrase: it was a summons to Serbia to abdicate her sovereignty and independence, and to exist henceforth as a vassal-state of the Dual Empire. This document is the Devil's Cauldron from which have sprung all the horrors of the present war. As to its extravagant character and probable consequences, opinion is unanimous, even unofficial German opinion. The Berlin *Vorwärts* writes (25th July)—

"From whatever point of view one considers the situation, a European War is at our gates. And why? Because the Austrian Government and the Austrian War Party are determined to clear, by a *coup de main,* a place in which they can fill their lungs."

In the Foreign Offices the same language was used. Sir Edward Grey said to the Austrian Ambassador that he "had never before seen one State address to another independent State a document of so formidable a character." The reader can

very easily verify for himself this impression by reference to the *Diplomatic Correspondence.* To such a document Serbia was given forty-eight hours to reply. As M. Denis points out, Prinzip, the assassin, taken in the act, was allowed three months to prepare his defence, for he was not brought to trial until October: the Serbian nation, exhausted by two wars, was allowed two days in which to decide between a surrender of its independence and an immediate invasion. Almost "to the scandal of Europe," a reply was delivered within the time. The Austrian representative received it at Belgrade, and in half-an-hour had demanded his passports; fifteen minutes later he was on board the train. The *will to war* of the Germanic Powers find many cynical and dramatic expressions in the interchanges between the Chancelleries, but none so nude of all decency as this.

In these two days M. Pashich, in his passionate anxiety for peace, had agreed to terms more humiliating than have often been dictated after a victorious war. The Austrian Note had opened with a long indictment of the Serbian nation. Complicity in the crime of Sarajevo was assumed without any tittle of evidence, however vague or feeble, then or since produced. Nevertheless the Serbian Prime Minister bowed to the storm. His surrender was so complete that it deserves to be read textually. These are, in skeleton, the main features (British Blue Book, No. 39).

The Serbian Government, having protested their entire loyalty past and present to their engagements, both of treaty and of neighbourliness towards Austria-Hungary, nevertheless "undertake to cause to be published on the first page of the *Journal Officiel,* on the date of the 13th (26th) of July, the following declaration—

'The Royal Government of Serbia condemn all propaganda which may be directed against Austria-Hungary, that is to say, all such tendencies as aim at ultimately detaching from the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy territories which form part thereof, and they sincerely deplore the baneful consequences of these criminal movements. The Royal Government regret that, according to the communication from the Imperial and Royal Government, certain Serbian officers and officials should have taken part in the above-mentioned propaganda, and thus compromised the good neighbourly relations to which the Royal Serbian Government was solemnly engaged by the declaration of the 31st of March, 1909, which declaration disapproves and repudiates all idea or attempt at interference with the destiny of the inhabitants of any part whatsoever of Austria-Hungary, and they consider it their duty formally to warn the officers, officials and entire population of the kingdom that henceforth they will take the most rigorous steps against all such persons as are guilty of such acts,

to prevent and to repress which they will use their utmost endeavour.'

"This declaration will be brought to the knowledge of the Royal Army in an order of the day, in the name of His Majesty the King, by His Royal Highness the Crown Prince Alexander, and will be published in the next official army bulletin."

The Serbian Government further undertakes—

1. To introduce severe Press laws against any anti-Austrian propaganda, and to amend the constitution so as to give more vigorous effect to these laws.

2. To dissolve the "Narodna Odbrana," although none of its members have been proved to have committed criminal acts, and "every other society which may be directing its efforts against Austria-Hungary."

3. To *remove without delay from their public educational establishments in Serbia all that serves or could serve to foment propaganda against Austria-Hungary.* (I print this in italics that the shades of the sins of the National Board may find comfort and be appeased.)

4. To remove from the Army all persons proved guilty of acts directed against Austria-Hungary.

5. "The Royal Government must confess that they do not clearly grasp the meaning or the scope of the demand made by the Imperial and Royal Government that Serbia shall undertake to accept the collaboration of the organs of the Imperial and

Royal Government upon their territory, but they declare that they will admit such collaboration as agrees with the principle of international law, with criminal procedure, and with good neighbourly relations.

6. "It goes without saying that the Royal Government consider it their duty to open an enquiry against all such persons as are, or eventually may be, implicated in the plot of the 15th of June, and who happen to be within the territory of the kingdom. As regards the participation in this enquiry of Austro-Hungarian agents or authorities appointed for this purpose by the Imperial and Royal Government, the Royal Government cannot accept such an arrangement, as it would be a violation of the Constitution and of the law of criminal procedure; nevertheless, in concrete cases communications as to the results of the investigation in question might be given to the Austro-Hungarian agents."

7. To arrest any incriminated persons.

8. To reinforce and extend the measures against illicit traffic of arms and explosives across the frontier, and to punish severely any official who has failed in his duty.

9. To deal with any anti-Austrian utterances of Serbian officials.

10. To keep the Austro-Hungarian Government informed of the carrying out of these engagements.

Then follows the offer which confirms the good faith of Serbia, and which damns the Central Empires before the Judgment of History.

"If the Imperial and Royal Government are not satisfied with this reply, the Serbian Government, considering that it is not to the common interest to precipitate the solution of this question, are ready, as always to accept a pacific understanding, either by referring this question to the decision of the International Tribunal of The Hague, or to the Great Powers which took part in the drawing up of the declaration made by the Serbian Government on the 18th (31st) of March, 1909."

Of the ten points of the Austrian Note eight are conceded under conditions of unparalleled humiliation. No diplomatic triumph could be more complete. Serbia yields, well knowing that her immediate past is a good deal fly-blown and that nobody in Western Europe has the least intention of dying for her *beaux yeux*. But paragraphs 5 and 6, demanding the association of Austrian officials in judicial enquiries to be held within the territory and under the jurisdiction of the Serbian Government, aim at more than humiliation; they demand that Serbia shall abdicate her own independent sovereignty. M. Pashich rejects them, but in a mode that will remain as the final condemnation before history of the Germanic Powers.

M. Sazonof went to the root of the matter at once in a conversation with the Austrian represen-

tative in Petrograd. This is the Austrian version (24th July)—

"The participation of Imperial and Royal (Austrian) officials in the suppression of the revolutionary movements elicited further protest on the part of the minister. Serbia then will no longer be master in her own house. You will always be wanting to interfere again, and what a life you will lead Europe."

"Serbia would no longer be master in her own house." There was the key to Austrian ambitions. The independence of Serbia was to be violated, her territory was to admit foreign officials, and gradually a small nation was to disappear into the patchwork-quilt possessions of the *Dual Monarchy*. There you have the sinister House of the Hapsburgs exposed in the very act of pressing the button, and releasing the current which has shattered the fabric of Europe.

Swaddle and disguise it as you will in words, there is the seed of origin of the European War. There is no plainer transaction in history: the clock has a crystal face that allow us to see all the works. You may, if you will, call up a mist of eloquence and people it with ghosts, the ghosts of wicked things done by English in Ireland and India, Russians in Finland, French in Morocco, Italians in Tripoli, Belgians in the Congo, and Serbians all the way back to Kosovo. You may write at length of the inherent perils of the "Euro-

pean system," the expansion of races, the discharge of long accumulating thunder-clouds, of *Hauptströmungen,* of iron laws of destiny, and all the rest of the lurid, deterministic farrago of sham omniscience which forms the stock-in-trade of the German savant. You may point out that there is a sense in which all previous history is behind even the least important event in history, and that the Austrian ultimatum did but set a match to a long-laid train. Much of what you say will be true, and much will also be horrible. But nothing can alter the fact that this war originated in the attempt of a great Empire to exploit legitimate anger against crime in order to destroy the independence of a small State; that the small State, having accepted every other humiliation, offered to submit in this to the judgment of either of the recognised international tribunals, and that the great Empire refused.

The one theory, the only one, that explains the Austrian attitude, namely, that the Germanic Powers willed war, explains also the remainder of the *ante-bellum* interchanges. From the first no illusion was possible as to what was at stake. M. Sazonof on behalf of Russia allowed none to arise. He pointed out with that brevity and frankness which will be found in this affair to characterise the whole course of Russian diplomacy that any invasion of the sovereign rights of Serbia must disturb the equilibrium of the Balkans and with it the equilibrium of all Europe, and that if it came to war it would be impossible to localise it. M.

Sazonof, indeed, never fails in these transactions to hit on the right idea, and the right phrase. Serbia, he said to Count Szapary in words that can scarce miss moving an Irish Nationalist, would, if the Austrian demands were conceded, "no longer be master in her own house. 'You will always be wanting to intervene again, and what a life you will lead Europe' " (Austrian Red Book, No. 14). He "had been disagreeably affected by the circumstance that Austria-Hungary had offered a dossier for investigation when an ultimatum had already been presented." What Russia could not accept with indifference was the eventual intention of the Dual Monarchy *"de dévorer la Serbie"* (*Ibid.*, No. 16). In all her reasonable demands he promised to support Austria-Hungary. So did France; so did Great Britain. All three of them counselled, that is to say as things stood, directed, Serbia, if she desired their countenance, to give every satisfaction consistent with her sovereign rights. It is precisely on this unallowable violation that Austria-Hungary insists. As for Germany, there is not one hint in all the diplomatic documents of any mediation at Vienna in the direction of a peaceful solution. "The bolt once fired," said Baron Schoen at Paris, Germany had nothing to do except support her Ally, and support her in demands however impossible.

The will to war of the Germanies thus made manifest explains, and alone explains the rest of

the sorry business. The earnest, constant, and even passionate efforts of the British and French Governments to find a formula for the assembling of a conference of the Powers were rebuffed at every turn. Sir Edward Grey persisted in his conciliatory course till the last moment. He refused to proclaim the solidarity of the United Kingdom in any and all circumstances with France and Russia, although earnestly urged by both to do so.

He risked the very existence of the Entente by showing himself ready in the interests of peace to consent to what Russia must have regarded as an almost intolerable humiliation. So late as the 29th of July he writes of a conversation with the German Ambassador: "In a short time, I supposed, the Austrian forces would be in Belgrade and in occupation of some Serbian territory. But even then it might be possible to bring some mediation into existence, if Austria, while saying that she must hold the occupied territory until she had complete satisfaction from Serbia, stated that she would not advance further, pending an effort of the Powers to mediate between her and Russia" (Blue Book, No. 88). At the same time, six days before the Anglo-German breach, he gave the Ambassador a very definite warning which is in itself sufficient to repel the charge, since made in some quarters in Ireland and America, that he designed by his ambiguous attitude to "lure" Germany on and then "crush" her. That such a charge, whether made

honestly or not, is in formal contradiction with the facts is evident—

"The situation was very grave. While it was restricted to the issues at present actually involved, we had no thought of interfering in it. But if Germany became involved in it, and then France, the issue might be so great that it would involve all European interests; and I did not wish him to be misled by the friendly tone of our conversation—which I hoped would continue—into thinking that we should stand aside.

"I hoped that the friendly tone of our conversations would continue as at present, and that I should be able to keep as closely in touch with the German Government in working for peace. But if we failed in our efforts to keep the peace, and if the issue spread so that it involved practically every European interest, I did not wish to be open to any reproach from him that the friendly tone of all our conversations had misled him or his Government into supposing that we should not take action, and to the reproach that, if they had not been so misled, the course of things might have been different.

"The German Ambassador took no exception to what I had said; indeed, he told me that it accorded with what he had already given in Berlin as his view of the situation."

The appeal from force to law, from killing to reason—that substitution of the better new way

for the bad old way which had for so long been the goal of democracy in international affairs—was rejected by the Germanies. Neither to the International Tribunal of the Hague, so proposed by Serbia, nor to a conference of the Great Powers, but to the sinister logic of Krupp and Zeppelin did the Central Empires resort for a settlement.

All the accumulated hatred of European history were let loose to fill the world with tumult and rapine. It is true that if you trace these hatreds back to their sources you will find no immaculate nations. True also that they were perilous stuff of which the European system had not purged itself. But the unchallengeable fact remains that while democracy was seeking a solution in terms of peace, "the old German God" forced it in terms of war. Nothing can ever displace or disguise the plain historical record which exhibits as the origin of our Armageddon the intransigent determination of the great Empire of Austria-Hungary to violate the sovereign rights of the small nation of Serbia.

WHY IRELAND FOUGHT

III.—THE CRIME AGAINST BELGIUM

THE case of Belgium is marked by the tremendous simplicity which characterises almost everything in human affairs that can be called really great. The choice put to her was a choice between right and wrong, so naked and clear, so stripped of all ambiguities, all subintents and saving-clauses as to resemble rather a battle between spiritual principles than a concrete situation in contemporary politics. And, further, Belgium was and till the end of time remains the touchstone of German *Kultur*. For generations the masters of Prussia had been elaborating a coherent doctrine of domination to be attained through scientific brutality. It is one of the sins of democracy to have thrust that doctrine out of its thoughts, whenever it so much as heard of it, as being too bad to be true, for the foul thing was meant down to its worst word. All the world knows now that although Prussia is not to be believed when she promises fidelity, she is most thoroughly to be believed when she threatens murder; it was assigned to Belgium that in her blood this discovery should be proclaimed, not to be forgotten while men live.

Belgium is the test by which every issue in this war stands or falls. The late Judge Adams used to relate how he once set up for a horse-stealer a complicated and eloquent defence ranging from the French Revolution to the Irish Land System. The Judge listened patiently to the last word of the ringing peroration, and then observed: "Very good, Mr. Adams, very good! But tell me now: Why did your client steal the horse?" In the same way you will hear your Prussian or pro-Prussian rambling on about the Slav menace to German "culture," about the secret designs of France, and the robber Empire of Great Britain. To get to the heart of this question you have only to say: "Very fine, no doubt. Something in it, perhaps! But tell us now, why did your German friend break his solemn guarantee, and violate the frontier of neutral independent Belgium?" That trivial arrow is enough to bring to earth the Zeppelin of his *Welt-Politik,* with its whole cargo of metaphysics.

There was no illusion to cloud the minds of King Albert or his Government. The King knew his Kaiser; he had already been menaced by him, and his Chief of Staff von Moltke, in an interview reported by M. Jules Cambon nine months before the war (French Yellow Book, No. 6). He had had every opportunity afforded him of studying the gospel according to Krupp. He knew that, when the ultimatum was delivered at Brussels, the

German Army of the Lower Rhine was already massed and was marching on Liége, and that no help could possibly reach him from France or England before the 42 cm.'s had ample time to batter his eastern defences to pieces. He knew also how inadequate were his own military resources; a scheme of reorganisation that would have enabled Belgium to put in the field an army of defence of a million men had indeed been formulated, but was not yet in operation. Every German and pro-German influence in the country was invoked to induce him to break his treaty obligations, and stand aside. The Social Democrats publicly and shamelessly appealed to their Belgian "comrades" to rise superior to "that bourgeois idea, honour." But the King and his Government held fast.

The position of Belgium was as clear as it was terrible. One sometimes hears ill-informed people speak as if the neutrality of that country had been a matter of its own choice, from which it could depart by a new act of choice. This, of course, was not the case. Neutrality was imposed on Belgium, as the price and the correlative of guaranteed independence, by the five Powers whose signatures will be found appended to the treaties of 1831 and 1839. Situated at the cross-roads of Europe, Belgium had by the deliberate policy of Europe been established as a buffer-state, a buffer by land between France and Germany, and by sea between England and the heart of the Continent. Her neutrality was not a

commodity to bargain with, but a fundamental condition of her independence; it was her formal duty to preserve it, or at least attempt to preserve it, by force of arms against any invasion. Should any of the guarantors assail it the others were bound to come to its defence. It has been suggested that both France and Great Britain were very ill-prepared to fulfil this obligation; German writers have, indeed, tauntingly gloated over the fact, for it is a fact. The bad faith of Germany was so long evident—her very army manœuvres having been, in fact, based on the hypothesis of a rapid invasion of Belgium—that defensive measures were plainly called for. But two points must be remembered. For one thing, the moral question remains unaltered. You do not justify a murderer by saying that the police ought to have been there to prevent him committing the crime. For another, any new defensive organisation adopted would certainly have been represented by Germany as a clear proof of intended aggression, and would in all likelihood have precipitated the outbreak.

It is necessary to bear all these circumstances in mind in order to appreciate at its full worth the heroic decision of Belgium. Deliberately, with the courage not of hot blood but of conscience and honour, she lost the world in order to gain her own soul. In the treachery of Germany there was lacking not even one episodical baseness. Her representatives lied up to the last moment. Two

hours before he presented his ultimatum the German Minister at Brussels issued a message of reassurance through the columns of *Le Soir;* well do I remember how avidly the citizens of Brussels not so much bought as tore out of the hands of the newsboys that issue of the 2nd of August with Herr von Below Saleske's message, and the sigh of relief that followed the reading of it. He employed an image the sinister fitness of which we did not then suspect.

"I have not done so, and personally I do not see any reason why I should have done so, seeing that it was superfluous. The view has always been accepted by us that the neutrality of Belgium will not be violated. If the French Minister had made a formal declaration to that effect it is doubtless because he wished to reinforce obvious fact by some words of reassurance. *The German troops will not march over Belgian territory. We are on the eve of grave events. Perhaps you will see your neighbor's house on fire, but the flames will spare yours."*

The vision of burning towns has come to have a sinister fitness.

We know now that already, on the 31st of July, Germany had declined to give any undertaking to respect Belgian neutrality because any reply to the British demand made in that sense "could not but disclose a certain amount of their plan of campaign in the event of war ensuing." There is no more

illuminating phrase in the whole body of correspondence. The violation, it thus plainly appears, was no improvisation under stress of circumstances; on the contrary, it had long since been assumed as a postulate by the German General Staff in the drafting of their war-plan. The declaration of war by a guaranteering Great Power on a guaranteed small nation is a thing so infrequent, it is such a salient in the long line of iniquity, that it must once again be quoted in full. Any guardian in private life who finds himself reluctantly compelled in the interests of a higher morality to murder his ward, any trustee obliged by *Notwehr* to steal the trust-property, may well enrol it among his forms and precedents. It was delivered at Brussels at seven o'clock on the evening of the 2nd of August. It is worth noting that it was drawn up in German, by way of compliment, no doubt, to the "Teutonic kinship" of Belgium—

"(Very confidential.)

"Reliable information has been received by the German Government to the effect that French forces intend to march on the line of the Meuse by Givet and Namur. This information leaves no doubt as to the intention of France to march through Belgian territory against Germany.

"The German Government cannot but fear that Belgium, in spite of the utmost goodwill, will be unable without assistance to repel so considerable a French invasion with sufficient prospect of success

to afford an adequate guarantee against danger to Germany. It is essential for the self-defence of Germany that she should anticipate any such hostile attack. The German Government would, however, feel the deepest regret if Belgium regarded as an act of hostility against herself the fact that the measures of Germany's opponents force Germany, for her own protection, to enter Belgian territory.

"In order to exclude any possibility of misunderstanding, the German Government make the following declaration—

"1. Germany has in view no act of hostility against Belgium. In the event of Belgium being prepared in the coming war to maintain an attitude of friendly neutrality towards Germany, the German Government bind themselves, at the conclusion of peace, to guarantee the possessions and independence of the Belgian Kingdom in full.

"2. Germany undertakes, under the above-mentioned condition, to evacuate Belgian territory on the conclusion of peace.

"3. If Belgium adopts a friendly attitude, Germany is prepared, in co-operation with the Belgian authorities, to purchase all necessaries for her troops against a cash payment, and to pay an indemnity for any damage that may have been caused by German troops.

"4. Should Belgium oppose the German troops, and in particular should she throw difficulties in

the way of their march by a resistance of the fortresses on the Meuse, or by destroying railways, roads, tunnels, or other similar works, Germany will, to her regret, be compelled to consider Belgium as an enemy.

"In this event, Germany can undertake no obligations towards Belgium, but the eventual adjustment of the relations between the two States must be left to the decision of arms.

"The German Government, however, entertain the distinct hope that this eventuality will not occur, and that the Belgian Government will know how to take the necessary measures to prevent the occurrence of incidents such as those mentioned. In this case the friendly ties which bind the two neighbouring States will grow stronger and more enduring."

I beg the reader to notice carefully the nature of the "evidence" against France set forth in the first paragraph. The Belgian Army is weaker than that of France, *therefore* France is going to invade Belgium. Since the time of the grave-digger in *Hamlet* there was never such logic as this. All Prussian "culture" is in the document: the coarse offer of ready cash, the clumsy lie, the empty promise, and the mailed fist.

King Albert called his Ministers together, and at seven o'clock the following morning great "little Belgium" handed this proud reply to the unmoral Goliath. [I omit the formal first paragraph.]—

"This notification has profoundly and painfully astonished the King's Government.

"The intentions which she attributes to France are in contradiction to the formal declarations made to us under date of the 1st of August in the name of the Government of the Republic.

"*Moreover, if, contrary to our expectation, the country's neutrality should be violated by France, Belgium would fulfil its international duties and her army would oppose a most vigorous resistance to the invader.*

"The treaties of 1839, confirmed by the treaties of 1870, perpetuate Belgium's independence and neutrality under the guarantee of the Powers, and especially under the guarantee of the Government of His Majesty the King of Prussia.

"Belgium has always faithfully observed her international obligations; she has fulfilled her duties in a spirit of loyal impartiality; she has neglected no opportunity to maintain her neutrality and to cause it to be respected by others.

"The attack upon her independence with which Germany menaces her is a flagrant violation of the law of Nations.

"No strategic interest can justify the violation of that right.

"The Belgian Government, by accepting the propositions mentioned, would sacrifice its national honour and betray at the same time its duty towards Europe.

"Conscious of the rôle which Belgium has played for more than eighty years in the civilised world, it refuses to believe that its independence can only be preserved at the price of a violation of its neutrality.

"If the Belgian Government be disappointed in its expectations, it is resolved to repulse by every means in its power any attack upon its rights."

Of these documents we in Brussels were at the time, of course, wholly ignorant. But on Tuesday, August 4th, we became aware that some terrible darkness had come upon the sun. There was galloping and the glitter of swords and lances in the streets; the King was on his way to take counsel with a specially summoned session of his Parliament. In a little while the newsboys were crying the papers madly through the streets; we tore them from their hands, and the smudged print blazed into our souls that speech with which Albert rose to take his place among the heroes of European freedom. I make no apology for printing here every word of it. It is the case of Belgium, the case of the Allies, and the case of civilisation.

"Never, since 1830, has a more serious hour struck for Belgium: the integrity of our territory is threatened!

"The very strength of our right, the sympathy which Belgium, proud of her free institutions and of her moral conquests, has uninterruptedly en-

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joyed at the hands of other nations, the necessity of her autonomous existence for the equilibrium of Europe, still make us hope that the threatening events will not take place.

"However, if our expectations be deceived, if we are obliged to resist the invaders of our soil and to defend our menaced homes, this duty, however hard, will find us armed and prepared for the greatest sacrifices.

"Already our gallant youth, in anticipation of every eventuality, is ready, firmly resolved, with the traditional tenacity and coolness of the Belgians, to defend the endangered country.

"In the name of the nation, I fraternally salute the army. Everywhere, Flemings and Walloons, in the cities and in the country, one sole sentiment binds our hearts: Patriotism; one sole vision fills our spirits: our endangered independence; one sole duty imposes itself upon us: a stubborn resistance.

"Under these circumstances two virtues are indispensable: a cool courage, but a strong courage, and a close union of all the Belgian people.

"Both of these virtues have already been demonstrated brilliantly under the eyes of the nation, filled with enthusiasm.

"The perfect mobilisation of our army, the number of voluntary enlistments, the devotion of the civil population, the self-denial of families, have

shown, beyond dispute, the consoling bravery which animates the whole Belgian people.

"The time for action has come.

"I have assembled you, Gentlemen, in order to allow the Legislative Chambers to unite with the people in the same spirit of sacrifice.

"You will therefore immediately take measures necessary for war as well as for preservation of public order, under the present circumstances.

"When I look upon this enthusiastic assembly, an assembly in which there is but one party, the side of the Fatherland, where every heart beats in unison, my mind goes back to the Congress of 1830, and I ask you, Gentlemen, are you firmly resolved to maintain the sacred patrimony of your forefathers?

"None in this country but will do his duty.

"The army, strong and disciplined as it is, is equal to its task. My Government and myself have the utmost confidence in its leaders and its soldiers.

"Closely allied with the population, and supported by it, the Government is conscious of its responsibilities and will assume them to the very end with the deliberate conviction that the efforts of each and every one, if united in a spirit of most fervent patriotism, will safeguard the supreme welfare of the country.

"If the foreigner, trampling upon our neutral-

ity, the duties of which we have always scrupulously observed, violates, the territory, he will find every Belgian around his Sovereign, who will never betray his Constitutional Oath, and around the Government invested with the supreme confidence of the entire nation.

"I have faith in our destiny: a country which defends itself cannot but gain the respect of everyone: that country cannot perish.

"German troops have occupied Luxemburg, and are perhaps even now trampling upon Belgian soil. This act is contrary to the law of Nations."

The rumour ran through Brussels from end to end as with the swift vibrations that at such times shake the sensitive organism of all Latin cities. Nobody who was there will ever forget the torrential and swirling crowds before the Gare du Nord, the fierce cheers and the foreboding silence. The peace of eighty years was broken. Honour and the law of Europe had summoned Belgium into the red ways of war; she went singing and unafraid, but the vision of blood was not hidden from her or from us. As we stood on the café tables roaring "La Brabançonne" we knew that there was a midnight to traverse before the dawn. But we did not know that the upbuilding of three generations of human labour was to be broken by three months of scientific brutality. We did not know that Belgium was passing into her Gethsemane.

On the same day von Emmich had marched his columns across the Rubicon that divides honour from infamy. On the same day some hours later Sir Edward Grey had drawn the sword, and flung away the scabbard.

UNDER THE HEEL OF THE HUN

I.—A World Adrift

Brussels, August 5, 1914.

ALL Europe is a study in strain. The unexpected swing of events has brought Belgium—Belgium which for eighty years has lived only for a neutral independence—to the centre of the arena. The Waterloo of 1914, as that of 1815, may very well be fought on Belgian soil.

It is impossible to exaggerate the sincere amazement of the man in the street, the man in the café. "We have gorged the Albuches with money. They have blacklegged us in business. We are stuffed with them—bah! our national life is choked with these German sausages. And now! Traitors, cowards, violators of honour and the free Belgian frontier!"

The anti-German feeling is heating rapidly to a frenzy. No more demi-Munichs in the restaurants. Even if the beer be of German nativity, which is sometimes a little in doubt, it must be sold as Belgian. The more discreet patrons had already painted out, or draped in patriotic bunting, all advertisements for German products. But the ruse was not general nor always successful.

The window-breakers had already appeared, waving the tricolour, chanting "La Brabançonne." Every street, and, indeed, every buttonhole, has blossomed as suddenly as the staff of Tannhäuser. Cockades, rosettes, bows, the tricolours of France and Belgium, the red, white and blue of England, flower inexplicably into being. At ten centimes a time we manifest our sympathies, and make dazzling fortunes for the street-sellers.

At the house of a public official one finds a sort of synopsis of the general desolation. The family has just scrambled back from Switzerland. The eldest son, a captain of engineers, had already left for the front, ordered to action too urgently to wait even for a last handshake, a last kiss. His children cannot go out to breathe the air because the governess is German, and therefore liable to patriotic assault. The household is keyed up to any disaster.

At the Post Office there is a tumult that soon settles down into a patient queue outside the savings bank and money-order offices. The cashiers pay out the new five-franc notes; fresh and crisp, obviously and attractively new, they are fingered with distrustful fingers. Then the fingers grow suddenly ashamed of their distrust in the star of Belgium, stuff their notes into their wallets, and step briskly out to the music of the drums that beat in all hearts.

The English declaration of war has evoked ex-

traordinary enthusiasm, and at the same time brought so near the sombre and terrible crisis as to still the expression of that enthusiasm. It was no light-hearted crowd that stood to watch the Red Cross go to the front this morning. They streamed by in commandeered or volunteered motor-cars. Soldiers, unshaven and unslept, lounged with their boots upon cushions that a few days ago ministered to the very dainty masters of luxury. Limousines, taxis, trade-cars all went by laden with stretchers and medicine-cases. Everywhere the smell of rubber and antiseptics. And everywhere the desolating thought that before midnight these snowy bandages will be bloodied, and these stretchers laden with human debris. A la guerre comme à la guerre!

Everywhere girls are hurrying through the streets with tin collecting-boxes. We subscribe to the Red Cross, to funds to support those about to become widows of the sword, to buy milk for the infants. Many of the great hotels have already been offered as hospitals. The gleaming symbol of Geneva—that inexplicable lapse of the soldiers of Europe into plain Christian mercy—is already displayed on them. Shops, big and small, are being prepared to serve as depots for the distribution of food in case of need.

It is impossible not to be with Belgium in the struggle. It is impossible any longer to be passive. Germany has thrown down a well-considered chal-

lenge to all the deepest forces of our civilisation. War is hell, but it is only a hell of suffering, not a hell of dishonour. And through it, over its flaming coals, Justice must walk, were it on bare feet.

UNDER THE HEEL OF THE HUN

II.—"EUROPE AGAINST THE BARBARIANS"

Brussels, August 8.

WE may well doubt whether any imagination is large enough to contain the issues of the war. It overwhelms us and freezes our blood fast like a vision of terror from the Apocalypse. What is, perhaps, most terrible of all is the complete and necessary banishment of peace from the scene of Europe. Hereafter there may be a time for such a word, but not now. The arbitration movement to which we had committed so many hopes has gone up in flames like a cardboard Elysium. Europe, we said, was a monstrous contradiction in terms—an armed peace. There is no contradiction now, it is a manual of pure logic after Krupp. The Norman Angell evangel to the money-masters has failed; there is even something noble in the sudden appeal of the financiers of every country to a higher plane of values. You may suspend your International Bureau of Labour which used to function at Brussels. Jaurès is dead; Vandervelde, cherishing *la patrie* beyond everything else, has joined the Ministry; in Germany, as in France, Belgium, and Great Britain, the comrades are with

the colours. When next the committee-room of the Maison du Peuple receives the European chiefs of labour what a change will be there!

As for Serbia, it seems probable that nobody will have time to go to war with her. Her function has been that of the electric button which discharges the great gun of a fortress. And now that the lightnings have been released, what is the stake for which we are playing? It is as simple as it is colossal. It is Europe against the barbarians. The authentic Teuton touch betrayed itself in the gross proposition of bribes, followed by the instant violation of the Belgian frontier. The "big blonde brute" stepped from the pages of Nietzsche out on to the plains about Liége. Brought suddenly to think of it, one realises the corruption of moral standards for which Germany has in our time been responsible. Since Schopenhauer died nothing has come from her in the region of philosophy except that gospel of domination.

And now we suddenly understand that the Immoralists meant what they said. We were reading, not as we thought a string of drawing-room paradoxes, but the advance proof-sheets of a veritable Bullies' Bible. The General Bernhardis who have been teaching Germany to desire wàr, to provoke it, to regard it as a creative and not a destructive act, to accept it as merely the inevitable prologue to German domination, have proved to be not only brutal, but formidable. Since Belgium, and its

protecting treaty, barred the way, both simply had to go. "Nothing is true, everything is permitted to the strong." Afterwards it will be the turn of the others. And at the end of the process a monster, gorged with blood and with the torn limbs of civilisation, is to lie sprawled over all Central Europe, while some new metaphysician from Berlin booms heavily into his self-intoxicated brain some new fable of preordination.

I do not wish in any way to exaggerate. France has her corruptions. But the whole set of her thought, even when it abjured Christian "illusions," was towards solidarity, towards reasonableness, and co-operation. Russia has her vile tyrannies. But from all Russian literature there comes an immense and desolating sob of humility and self-reproach. Great Britain has not yet liquidated her account with Ireland, nor altogether purified her relations with India and Egypt. But Great Britain does not, at any rate, throw aside all plain, pedestrian Christian standards as rubbish. In the Rhineland, too, and in the south there are millions of hearty men and women who are not yet Prussified, and who still think it possible that there may exist a Being greater in some respects than the Imperial Kaiser. But all the central thought of Germany has been for a generation corrupt. It has been foul with the odour of desired shambles.

The issue, then, is Europe against the barbarians.

It is not easy, perhaps, for anyone living at home in our islands to develop fully what may be called the European sense. You acquire it as you get your sea legs, quickly, but not without actual experience. There underlies the whole Continent a minutely reticulated system of nerves which convey, and multiply, every shock of feeling from one end of it to the other. Here in Brussels we are, for the time at least, at the central *sensorium*. The élan of Belgium takes possession of you. The courage and anguish of this glorious little nation, fighting now for its very life, stir one to something like the clear mood of its own heroism. In every direction there opens a vista of waste and suffering. Already the long trail of wounded has begun to wind its sorrowful way back to the capital. Prisoners arrive, too simple of aspect, one would think, to be the instruments by which Europe is to be tortured to the pattern of a new devilry. You say to yourself, as you hear all the world saying: C'est incroyable! It is not to be believed. It is a nightmare! And then the conviction shapes itself clearly, settles upon and masters your mind, that this German assault on civilisation has got to be repelled and utterly shattered once and for all.

Had Belgium consented to a free passage across her territory so that the French forts might be evaded, the problem was simply to profit by the slow mobilisation of France, and to strike straight and hard at Paris. On her refusal the problem

was to hamstring Belgium. Liége was to be carried by a *coup de main,* and the advance pushed right on to Antwerp. This would have cut the country in two, made anything like an effective Belgian mobilisation impossible, detached outlying places from their supply depots, and left Belgium helpless under the heel of a comparatively small section of the German forces. Both gambits have been countered. There has been no free passage and no surprise victory. The Belgian mobilisation has not been even hampered. The whole German plan was founded on a swift and invincible dash; in the actual event both characteristics are lacking. General Leman and Liége have given the Allies day on invaluable day to come up. The prestige which since 1871 has enveloped the Prussians and their war methods has disappeared at a blow. "Ah!" says the Belgian pioupiou to you, "those great Prussian teeth that chewed up France in the '70, they have bitten themselves to fragments against the forts of Liége. Nous sommes un peu là! Eh?"

The great outstanding pinnacle of a fact is, perhaps, the definitive entrance of England into the comity of Europe. Regret it or not, there can be no more isolation. And the other fact, noted here also as of main importance, is the attitude of Ireland. Mr. Redmond's proffer of friendship, in return for justice, had been made often before, but never in such dramatic circumstances. I am ap-

palled to hear rumours to the effect that Sir Edward Carson proposes at this moment to force Mr. Bonar Law to bedevil the whole situation by a political trick. He actually proposes, one hears, that a course should be followed depriving Ireland of the Home Rule Bill, which is coming to her automatically by the mere efflux of a few weeks. Can such madness still be possible? Is there any imagination left in England?

Here, at the opening of this vast and bloody epic, Great Britain is right with the conscience of Europe. It is assumed that she has reconciled Ireland. A reconciled Ireland is ready to march side by side with her to any desperate trial. And suddenly the lawyer, with the Dublin accent, who had been the chief architect of destruction in the whole Empire, and who was thought to have come to reason, proposes for Ireland what I can only call a Prussian programme. England goes to fight for liberty in Europe and for Junkerdom in Ireland. It is incredible. Were it to come true it would become utterly impossible to act on Mr. Redmond's speech. Another dream would have gone down into the abyss. Ireland, wounded anew, would turn sullenly away from you. Is that what a sound Tory ought to desire? Will Tory England, enlightened at last as to the real attitude of Ireland, allow such a fatal crime to be committed?

UNDER THE HEEL OF THE HUN

III.—TERMONDE

THE fate of Termonde is already known. But I do not apologise for adding to the literature of its devastation an account of a visit which I paid to-day. Imagination lacks the stringency of the scandal actually seen, and we have got, by repeated strokes, to hammer into the imagination of the world the things that Prussia has done in Belgium.

I went from Ghent to Zele by train this morning, and from Zele to Termonde by carriage. They call Ghent the flower-town, and not without some reason. It lies in that part of Flanders in which cultivation is at its most intensive. That is to say, it is the centre of one of the greatest agricultural areas in the world. Near Ghent it was nursery-gardens all the way, a checker-board of colour. The geraniums, we thought, will never again look like fire; they will look like blood. Further into the country fewer flowers and more crops and cattle. Not a square millimetre wasted. All the familiar Flemish picture; the windmill that looks like two combs crossed, and revolving on a pepper-box; the old churches, the old castles, reminiscent of the Spanish persecution; the strong peasant-faces—like those of my own "Ulster," but Catho-

lic—lined with labour; the wayside statues; the villages, with little beauty save that of fruitful effort.

It is a flat country all the way to Termonde, and especially as one nears the Scheldt. It is well timbered. I noticed again a contrast I have often noticed before. In England the trees look like gentlemen of leisure. If they do any good it is by a sort of graceful accident. In Belgium they look like soldiers. They stand there in planned ranks, repelling the infantry of the winds, drawing the artillery of the rain, sheltering, protecting. Add to them the waving patches of hemp, the corn-stacks, the rich herbage, and you get a closely-tufted and almost impenetrable country. It is striped everywhere also with little canals and ditches, so that any sort of military movement, except over the cobbled roads, must be almost impossible. If one remembers that the environs of the towns are almost the only places open enough for a conflict between any substantial forces, a good many events become more intelligible.

What Termonde was

But, for the moment, I am concerned with the impression of remoteness and quiet labour which such a country gives. The peasants yield to it. At Zele, at Lokeren, they feel the war as some great demon that has mysteriously passed them by.

And then, eight kilometres away, you turn the bend of a country road at the Bridge of Termonde and drive, let us say, from something that looks very like Kent into something that looks very like Hell.

Termonde was—— Let me recall what it was. It was a not unprosperous town of some eleven or twelve thousand people. Though not destitute of commerce and industries, it lived mainly on law (for it was an assize town), on education, and on the army. The two handsomest residences that I saw—one in puce-coloured brick at the approach to the bridge, the other more grandiose in stone and inexplicably saved in the principal street—belonged one to a judge, the other to an avocat. Termonde, like many other places in the Low Countries, had already been lifted into history by war. It repelled Louis XIV with its dykes, but Marlborough took it dry. Such was Termonde.

To-day it is a tumbled avalanche of brick, stone, twisted iron and shattered glass, over which the remaining public buildings rise like cliffs over a flood. I walked every foot of every street. Of the Rue de l'Eglise, the chief street, the Porte de Boom and Church of Notre Dame at one end, and the Hôtel de Ville, Palais de Justice, and Museum at the other are untouched. So is the avocat's house, of which I have spoken, chalked over with that piteous legend to which one has become so accustomed. Friends here! Please

spare! (in German and German characters). The rest of the street is as if the breath of Armageddon had withered it. The post office, the chapel and convent of the Poor Clares, the hospital, the orphanage have all disappeared.

There is no need to multiply descriptive details. It is always the same capricious devastation, the same arabesques of ruin, with which flame searches its mad way through architecture. About one-half of the Grand' Place has been saved owing to the fact that the Germans were gathered there, drinking champagne, when fire was being sown through the town.

The Marché au Bétail, a pretty little boulevard, has also disappeared. The great College, at its corner, like the other schools, is gone. Each of its façades resembles nothing so much as an X-ray photograph. Through the charred ribs of what was a house the green-red-and-white of a flower-garden flashes the eternal tricolour of nature.

Culture and the Sick

In the Marché au Lin the Church of the Récolletes and the National Bank lie disembowelled. It was here that the Germans laid on the pavements the sick and wounded while they burned the beds from which they had dragged them and the roof that had sheltered them.

A few small factory buildings on the left bank

of the river and the poorest section of the workmen's quarter remain. The rest of Termonde is a mere heap of bricks. It was; it no longer is. Walking out towards the southern side of the town I came suddenly—everything here happens suddenly—upon a note of desolation, not the most desolate, but the most crying of all. Through a chasm in a shattered façade I saw the white walls of little houses, the white coifs of nuns, and the waving green of trees. It was the Béguinage. Anyone who knows Flanders knows these remote pools of silence, these quiet backwaters where no oar breaks the surface, where the old and spent await death as one courteously awaits an honoured visitor. I stepped in and found myself in an irregular triangle of almshouses. At first nothing seemed to have been touched. But in the centre there was a church, fringed with dwarf cypress. Walking over, I found that it was, like Termonde, a skeleton. The Germans, a nun told me, had on the entreaty of two Dutch ladies, members of the community, consented to spare the cottages. But they insisted on making a bonfire of the "cottage of the Bon Dieu!"

Nothing was lacking in this abomination of desolation. I determined to have some photographs made. Yes! our guide—a big country farmer, who had out of pure courtesy accompanied us from Zele—knew of a photographer who

would doubtless be able to do our business. We went to look for him. His street had disappeared, his house with it. We walked back to the *estaminet* to ask where he might be found.

"But, monsieur! he was one of the first to be shot by the Germans!" Later, on one of the quays we saw a white wooden cross, with lime stamped down about its base. Bystanders told us that it marked the grave of two Belgian civilians. "Ah!" said our farmer, "it is perhaps there!"

Organised Infamy

Now as to the procedure of the Germans. The facts admit of no doubt. I set aside forthwith any damage caused to Termonde by the bombardment. The bridge was dynamited, a number of houses on the outskirts were shattered by shells. Nobody is childish enough to complain about that. War is war, and, technically, Termonde is a fortified town —though the old fortifications have been dismantled. But the burning was deliberate, scientific, selective, devoid of military purpose.

The German commander demanded a levy of two million francs. The money was not there in the public treasury, and the Burgomaster was not there to save his town as Braun saved Ghent. General Sommerfeld—that is the name that now wears such a nimbus of infamy—had a chair brought from an inn into the centre of the Grand

Place. He sat down on it, crossed his legs, and said: "It is our duty to burn the town!"

The inhabitants were allowed two hours to clear out. Then the soldiers went to work. Their apparatus is in the best tradition of German science —patented, for all I know, from Charlottenburg. It consists of a small portable pressure-caisson filled with benzine and fitted with a spray. Other witnesses said that there was also a great caisson on wheels. With this they sprinkled the doors, the ground storeys of the houses—as doorposts were once fatally sprinkled with blood in Egypt —and set fire to the buildings.

Others used a sort of phosphorus-paste with which they smeared the object to be destroyed. They completed the work by flinging hand-grenades and prepared fuses into the infant flames.

The selective power of this apparatus was remarkable. Remembering Louvain, and how the burning of the University had destroyed German prestige for a century, General Sommerfeld had evidently given directions that public monumental buildings were to be spared. Thus the Museum and the Hôtel de Ville both stand; but right between them his petroleurs picked out and destroyed a hotel as neatly as you pick a winkle out of a shell. Similarly they cut the avocat's house, of which I have spoken, out of their sea of destruction.

General Sommerfeld's soldiery stole, pillaged,

and drank everything on which they could lay hands. Witnesses on this point are many, and unshakable. Their moderation must impress anybody who talks to them. A citizen of Termonde who had himself been held as a hostage said to me, standing amid the ruins of his town—

"Monsieur! there is human nature also among the Germans. I saw many officers in tears. A lieutenant came and shook me by the hand, crying: 'It is not our fault! It is a shame!'"

"He must be Hanged"

Do not think that the evil, written here in the debris of Belgium, will be cancelled and blotted out by subscriptions and indemnities. It calls also for that holy vengeance without which all public law is a nullity. Sommerfeld has got to be hanged. When are the Allies going to issue a proclamation placing definitely outside the privilege of military law Sommerfeld and his kind?

The more one sees of Belgium the more deeply her magnificent courage pierces into the soul. I saw women weeping amid the ruins of Termonde. But I also saw builders' men stolidly smoking their pipes as they shovelled out the bricks and rubble to make room for new foundations.

I talked with the pioupious. They had torn up half the pavement on the southern road and

stretched barbed wire and brambles over the loose stones . . . to encourage the Uhlans. As you approached from without you saw the wicked eyes of the street trenches, and the grass-grown mounds of the old fortifications, winking down at you. The town was held by an outpost of three or four companies.

"Sir! American Sir!" said one of the pioupious, in the sort of English which an Antwerp Fleming who has spent two years among Scotchmen in the United States may be expected to speak. "Fourth Infantry of the Line at your service! We have two things only which we greatly much desire: Cigarettes and Revenge!"

Irish Horses

On the other side of the town a battery of artillery, magnificently horsed, was waiting under the trees for any alarm. Most of the horses were Irish. I felt a little *nostalgia* as I rubbed the sensitive nose of a roan mare. I wished that I had with me a poet or two of the Celtic renaissance to make a poem telling her how she had begun at the fair of Ballina, or Moy, or perhaps Ballsbridge itself, and how she would wander the white roads of Europe—not white now, but red—and die at last over there on the banks of the Rhine near pleasant Coblenz, or many-pinnacled Cologne. There being no poet about, I could but

scratch the butt of her ears and give her some chocolate.

Two hours in the tram, five on the carriage-trip, three and a half to accomplish the hour's train journey from Lokeren to Antwerp. I am now writing this impression of Termonde in this besieged city (in which no light is permitted after eight) by the light of two most excellent candles.

UNDER THE HEEL OF THE HUN

IV.—MALINES

THE prompt, creative courage of these Belgians is admirable. No sooner have the soldiers "cleaned" an invaded district than the engineers hurry along to rebuild bridges, repair railways, to open again the encumbered channels of intercourse. It was therefore without surprise that I found trains running again from Antwerp to Malines, crowded but comfortable, and sharp almost to the minute. Their resuscitating effect on the town, however, was not very great. It looked too much like pumping blood into a corpse.

The journey is right across one of the most important sectors of the Antwerp defences. The countryside shows the aspect of a sort of terrible security. It has been stripped not only to the skin, but to the skeleton. Woods, houses, where necessary, crops, have been sacrificed to the impregnability of the war capital. The typical prepared position shows a criss-cross entanglement of barbed wire, a long stretch of level ground, now entirely naked, more wire or *chevaux-de-frise* of pointed stakes, raised trenches, defended in front by artificial ditches, and glaring grimly down on the

whole scene of the forts of Brialmont, with death lying couched in its guns.

Of Malines little of the material fabric of the town has suffered, with the exception of the cathedral. Through about twenty other houses shells had torn gashes as erratic as those which apparently a bullet tears through living tissue. But most of the streets remain unchanged. This statement is not, perhaps, as reassuring as it sounds. It is as if you were to say, in speaking of an attack on Oxford, that only the colleges had suffered. Malines is not only a cathedral city; the cathedral, situated geographically at its heart, dominates its whole economy. It is the spiritual centre of Belgium. The Cardinal Archbishop's palace, unpretentious between its thick trees and its quiet canal, is in some sense the moral capital of this valorous people.

Like Louvain, Malines got its bread largely by education. Its manufacturing industries, so to say, radiated from the cathedral. It printed missals and breviaries. It made lace for ecclesiastical vestments, and then other lace. It cut and carved heavy oak into furniture for churches, and then it made other furniture. Every shell launched against the cathedral was therefore launched against the very being and essence of Malines city.

I am not ashamed to confess that when I, an Irish Catholic, walked into the Grand' Place and

saw the stamp of Berlin imprinted on those good grey walls I did not think at once of material injury, or money, or subscriptions. What came was anger against the desecration of a holy place. My mind said to me, "This is how Nietzsche has, from his grave, spat, as he wished to spit, upon Nazareth." A picture came of that sinister Quixote, who made cruelty his sacrament, and who was yet so humanly dear in some of his moods, standing behind a great Krupp howitzer and shouting, "Charlottenburg *contra* Christ. I back Charlottenburg!"

One notices in some of the English papers protests against the too ready acceptance of unanalysed and unconfirmed "atrocities." So liable is panic to mix myth with fact that I have pleaded more than once for the constitution of an International Commission to examine all the evidence. But in the meantime we find it difficult to divest ourselves of the faculty of inference. If you come, during time of war, upon a civilian, hanging by the neck, with his hands tied behind his back, and a fire burning under him, the theory of suicide or accident does not seem to embrace the full scope of the fact. A similar process of reasoning forces you to the conclusion that the Germans would not have hit Malines Cathedral so often if they had not aimed at it. The other buildings struck by shells are either on the line of fire to the Grand' Place or in its immediate neighbourhood.

The city was three times bombarded. Unlike Termonde, it is open and without the least trace of fortification. None of the bombardments achieved any military object. No attempt was made to capture, fire, shell, or in any way diminish in efficiency the State railway works. I fear that the case looks complete. The Germans deliberately broke through the laws of civilised war, and, just as deliberately, broke through the walls of the cathedral.

To describe in detail, and to put an estimate on the damage done, is a task for experts with ample time at their command. The Belgian Commission were to open a formal enquiry on the day following my visit, and kindly invited me to accompany them, but it was impossible. The following invoice of Hunnery is, therefore, only provisional. There is not a whole pane of glass left in the cathedral. The middle lateral window on the assailed flank of the edifice was itself struck; the others were shattered by the detonation. The stained glass is, I believe, modern, but as you saw it lying heaped on the pavement, like the shards of a rainbow, it looked beautiful enough to have been spared. A great gulf has been torn through the groined roof near its junction with the tower. The tower itself is blotched here and there a pallid white by the exploding shells. The great clock, the largest in Belgium, had been also struck, and its hands flapped in the wind like torn rib-

bons. The famous carillon, or peal of bells, does not, however, seem to have been injured.

In the left aisle the charred remnant of a canvas still hung in its frame, but what the picture was no one could tell me. The pavement itself was torn up here and there like ground uprooted by swine. The equestrian monument near the southerly entrance has, as to the horse, suffered decapitation, and the figure has lost an arm. Fragments chipped off mouldings and capitals lie about in desolate heaps. And to complete the desolation, all the precious objects have been removed from the cathedral as from the other churches and public buildings. The ciboria, the chalices, the candlesticks, the rich orphreyed vestments have been removed to Antwerp.

Thither have gone Van Dyck's "Crucifixion," and Rubens's "Miraculous Draught of Fishes." In its own way the most bizarre inhibition imposed by the war is that which prevents you from seeing a Rubens in Antwerp. They are all hidden away from the cultured burglars of Berlin. The "carnal ideal," which Verhaeren discovers behind the great strokes of his spiritual ancestor would, it is feared, prove irresistible to Attila.

On the day of my visit Cardinal Mercier had returned. I had last met him at Louvain—not in the flesh, but in his books. This master of psychology is one of those who have dared to think that the Latin definiteness of Thomas of Aquin is

closer to the sound soul of Europe than the fog of Koenigsberg, or the cloudy intoxication of Hegel. The scholar, called to rule, has also been called to suffer. He was passing through the Grand' Place as a long procession of women stood formed up outside the door of the municipal offices waiting wretchedly for bread. There was a stir, cheering, excitement which he repressed with a gesture. To those who approached him he said: "Your cheers are due to the army and the King, not to me. I am a Belgian citizen, no more."

The ruin of the civil population does not, as in Termonde, brand itself on your eyes, but it is, of course, none the less real. The city is a mere cemetery of shutters. The bombardments came after Louvain had been taught its lesson, and the Malinois did not stop to write notes on the text of that lesson. They fled *en masse*. One sees them in the rain and wind-swept bathing machines at Ostend. You hear them at Folkestone and in London. I saw still another packed trainload leaving Malines for Heyst-sur-Mer, from which many will disperse over the littoral generally, and others will filter into England. In Malines itself a few cafés, a few bakeries, and other shops of prime necessity are open. Everything else is as in a city of plague.

Consider what that means. It means, very bluntly, the triumph of German terrorism. If the Hague Convention is worth anything, and is

not merely another "scrap of paper," the lace-makers and the chair-makers of Malines should, under its protection, be now at work, and not in forced idleness and exile.

Readers must be weary of hearing the Prussian method characterised as one of scientific black-guardism. But that is what it is. There is nothing incoherent, tumultuous, or spasmodic about it; it goes on a well-formulated principle. And it has succeeded. By producing a panic among the civil population it has created the problem of the refugees. It inflicts day by day on Belgium an economic loss, the size of which cannot even be guessed at. Can nothing be done to check its operation? Can nothing be done to guarantee Malines against the fate of Termonde? The Belgian Commission in its last report stated the case with such concentrated force that no apology is needed for recalling their words—

"The true motives behind the atrocities, of which we have collected such heart-breaking evidence, can only be, on the one hand, the desire to terrorise and demoralise the civil population, conformably to the inhuman theories of German military writers, and, on the other hand, the desire to pillage. A shot fired, no one knows where, or by whom, or at whom, by a drunken soldier, or an excitable official, serves as a pretext for the sacking of a whole city. Individual looting is followed by the levying of war contributions so

large as to be unpayable, and by the taking away of hostages to be shot or held prisoners till the payment of the full ransom, after the approved and classical method of brigandage. It must also be remembered that all resistance opposed by the regular army is, according to the needs of the situation, ascribed to the inhabitants, and that the invader invariably avenges on the civil population the checks which he suffers during the campaign, and even his own mistakes.

"In the course of this enquiry we cite only facts supported by conclusive evidence. It is further to be observed that so far we have been able to signalise only a small part of a mass of crimes against law, humanity, and civilisation which will fill one of the most sinister and revolting pages in contemporary history. If an international enquiry, such as that made in the Balkans by the Carnegie Commission, could be made in Belgium, we are convinced that it would establish the truth of our assertions."

Why can it not be made? There are two public opinions in the United Kingdom—one sensational and weak, the other slow and strong. The first demands, so to say, a photograph of every limb of every corpse, and then "registers a protest." The second demands iron for iron and blood for blood. It is of the second that we have need. Accumulate and examine your evidence by all means, but then act. A nation, with sword in

hand, is not a public meeting; its function is not to protest, but to punish. A joint declaration by the Allies that every commanding officer, up to the Kaiser himself, guilty of an infraction of the laws of war, will be brought to trial and retribution, either immediately on capture, or after the victory, would, I am convinced, effectively stop the present plan of terrorism.

And what about America? Does her moral prestige not impose upon her a clear duty of initiative in this matter of an International Enquiry? Can she ultimately afford to keep such familiar company with the cloudy murderers of Berlin? These questions are hot for an answer.

The guns were hammering away all day over towards Termonde, and before I got back to Antwerp I had walked into a warm skirmish of patrols. They are at present the settled order of the day. Both sides keep nibbling away, but neither is in a position at present to risk a real mouthful.

UNDER THE HEEL OF THE HUN

V.—IN OSTEND

Sept. 24, Ostend.

FROM the military point of view Belgium is a backwater. It has no tide of its own. All its future movement depends on the ebb and flow of the immense struggle in France. The advance posts, or wandering patrols—if I may change the image—snarl and snap at one another continually. Every day, almost, from here to Antwerp, a German "Taube"—surely the most ill-omened dove that ever invaded the skies—hums over us. But Belgium has not yet got its cue.

The Belgian army would risk too much in a swoop on Brussels. The Germans, on the other hand, while less depleted than might have been anticipated, and strong enough to hold their own, are not strong enough to take the offensive with effect. We hear every day two scare stories. One is that Brussels has been evacuated; the other that von Goltz is pounding the forts at Antwerp. The mere mathematics of war rules out both; one for the present, the other, we hope and believe, for all time.

The weather has cleared. The equinox would

seem to have spent its showers, and the bloody and desperate pause on the Aisne should soon be resolved to our advantage. The moment that happens the "pistol of Antwerp" will go off. But the revenge is not yet.

It ought to be remembered that Belgium is one of the allied countries which had to sacrifice, and did sacrifice without a murmur, her richly beautiful capital, to the large strategical game which General Joffre has played with such brilliant success. She has since rejected temptations to peace offered under flag of truce at Antwerp by the Germans. With a noble faith and restraint she has put herself last, and the law of Europe first.

Meantime the Germans are reported to spend most of their time digging trenches north of Brussels. A very interesting traveller, who has just got back from the capital, tells us that the invaders call the Belgians "the little black rats," because of the effectiveness with which our pioupious pop up, pick off their men, and pop down again into invulnerability.

At Brussels French newspapers find their subterranean way through the whole population. The Hunnish attempt to kill knowledge of facts as they are born has been a gross failure. According to this witness, the whole temper of the population has changed. They have "learned the great language, caught the clear accent" of that magnificent Burgomaster of theirs, with the explosive

name, M. Max. They no longer allow themselves to be bullied.

President Wilson once wrote that in order to be moral you must cultivate the feeling that somebody is always looking on. In Brussels the American Minister, Mr. Brand Whitlock, is looking on. As lawyer, politician, and novelist, he possesses a triple intensity of vision. There will be no Termondes while that eye is levelled.

One is glad to say that, amid the general softness and protestations, King Albert's Government is standing for the salutary, strong law. At Sempst, near Malines, yesterday a German trooper was captured in a farmyard, in which he had just killed two children. He was taken to Waelhem, the facts were briefly established, and, without further ado, he was shot.

I notice that the Right Hon. G. W. E. Russell asks in *The Daily News* if we have the right to kill. Have we the right to spare? One thing we cannot escape from: the duty to punish. Nobody talks of revenge, or vindictiveness, or cruelty. But since we are fighting for justice, and since the gospel of murder—murder of the body and of the spirit—has been loosed against Europe, we have no choice.

We cannot restore Louvain, but we can give back to Belgium the glory of her own Rubens now exiled in the great gallery of Munich. We cannot call back Rheims out of its smoke of dis-

solution, but we can put Cologne again under the care of civilised France. We must not spoil or ravage one monument of humane effort, religious or secular, in Germany. But the Denkmal at Bingen has got to go, and the Column of Insolence at Berlin has got to go. Mr. Lowes Dickinson has said that Germany must not be humiliated. Not Germany, but Prussia must be humiliated. Berlin militarism must pass under the Caudine Forks, and the forks must be set so low as to sweep the spike of the helmet as it passes.

I saw a mad Belgian soldier taken away from the Ostend Infirmary a few days ago. Of course, I don't know, of my own personal observation, why he went mad. But one of the attendants told me that the soldier told him that he had remained the only survivor of a Belgian patrol which had repelled the attack of a much heavier German advance post. Reinforcements arrived; all his comrades were killed, and he was taken prisoner. His captors roped him up against a tree, in the posture of crucifixion, but without lifting his feet from the ground.

A firing party was ordered to take its stand at the usual twelve paces. Time after time their rifles went up to the "present!" Sometimes a volley was at that moment fired behind him. At last he was cut down; somehow or other he scrambled within reach of the Red Cross. They were very kind to him in Ostend, but he kept on babbling

about crucifixions and a crucifixion near Jerusalem.

The story is wholly "unverified," but the man himself so far believed it as to go mad. And since *L'Indépendance Belge* has thought that it should be published, I, who also saw the madman, also put it in print.

TREATING BELGIUM DECENTLY

August 31, 1914.

PERHAPS the finest thing in the whole colossal business in which we are now engaged is the frankness with which the French and British War Offices, and the Press in these countries, admit the checks and even actual reverses which the Allies are sustaining, and are bound in certain areas to sustain. It is understood that we cannot romance ourselves into victory. For the rest the censorship has been very prudently exercised, and is now much mitigated.

These circumstances make it difficult to understand the bald ambiguity of the news from Namur. Is it the town that has fallen or is it the forts? If the first, nothing; if the second, a new twist to the campaign. We are bound to assume, as all the military writers do, that the circle of forts has been captured or surrendered.

I do not want to say one word as to the military significance of the affair. And if a torrential German advance has, after enormous losses, swamped the defence, I do not want to say anything at all. But if, by chance, the defenders of Namur lacked the spirit of those of Liége; if, overwhelmed by the picture of blood, devastation,

and panic which the south-east of Belgium now presents, they yielded up their position; then the question, "Are we treating Belgium decently?" has a grave and urgent meaning.

I arrived yesterday from Belgium, knowing nothing of Namur. It seemed to me a clear duty to attempt in a small way to bring home to the people of these islands the appalling price that Belgium has had to pay for holding to the path of honour and courage. Nothing said here is a criticism of the purely military aspects of the prologue now concluded. It was inevitable that in the clash of millions, Belgium and her two hundred thousand soldiers should have been treated as a mere right-wing pawn. But think what the gambit meant to a Belgium patriot. It meant, in any and all circumstances, the devastation of Liége and the country behind it. It meant the surrender not only of the capital, but of the whole country except Antwerp. And the Belgians were under no illusions as to the terrorisation of non-combatants which is an essential part of the Prussian art of war. I quote from a Belgian journal the following summary of it. It is headed—

"THUS SPAKE . . . BISMARCK IN 1870

"True strategy consists in hitting your enemy, and hitting him hard. Above all, you must inflict on the inhabitants of invaded towns the max-

imum of suffering, so that they may become sick of the struggle, and may bring pressure to bear on their Government to discontinue it. You must leave the people through whom you march only their eyes to weep with.

"In every case the principle which guided our general was that war must be made terrible to the civil population, so that it may sue for peace."

And so on, and so on. Little Belgium—her gallant soldiers and her laborious peasants alike—has been mashed to a bloody pulp where the heel of the Prussian, shod with iron and with this damnable philosophy, has passed. And all the time the Belgians kept on asking in hope, in despair, "Where are the English? Where are the French?" Can you wonder if in the end they began to ask it in anger? Would it be a contradiction of all the laws of human nature to suppose that the panic terror which swept over the undefended land may have penetrated through the steel blinds of the forts of Namur, taken the heart out of the troops, impelled to surrender?

Let us examine our consciences. What have we done to show our appreciation of Belgium? There was the Royal message. There was Lord Sydenham's noble letter in *The Times* which has been quoted everywhere. There is a subscription on foot. There is the promised loan. So far so good. But it is not enough. The stunned sense of having been delivered to Armageddon is no-

ticeable everywhere, but especially in Flanders. The Flemish journals such as the *Laatste Nieuws* are full of violent anti-French, and in a less degree of anti-English articles. Germanophiles are harping on the kinship of the Flemish tongue, the Flemish stock and manners, to Germany. People sneer at the loan. My Flemish barber said to me on Sunday: "Oh! you are a fine people, you English. You look for business among the corpses. You will kindly lend us money at a good, whacking rate of interest. You philanthropists!"

What, then, is needed? War means blood and treasure. That faded phrase has been lit up suddenly, and we know what it means. The proof of blood the gallant soldiers of the two great Western Allies have already given at Mons and along the Sambre. I am convinced that the United Kingdom would be acting with fruitful generosity if Parliament were not to sanction a loan, but to vote a free grant.

Conjoined with that I hope and assume that Sir Edward Grey will renew the solemn pledges already given that, come what may, we mean to see Belgium through. The fear is general that the Germans may be allowed to get such a footing in Belgium as to have some plausible case in international law for proclaiming annexation. Let Parliament announce—and these dramatic cries and gestures of diplomacy are necessary—that so long as there is one shot left and one soldier to

fire it, the Allies will never allow one foot of Belgian soil to remain under German domination.

What I have written is not inspired by even the least touch of discouragement. The breakneck advance on the German right seems to me not the stride of conquerors, but the mad hurry of columns flung forward in a frenzied gamble. Sursum corda! But let us remember that all alliances need delicate handling. Belgium is in agony. A stroke, swift and generous, such as suggested, will recall her, and all her people, to the glorious courage of Liége. Antwerp, and the field army now sheltered about it, have still a great part to play.

BELGIUM IN PEACE

WORK OF THREE GENERATIONS—COMPARISONS WITH IRELAND—SOME MEMORIES

IT is an irony characteristic of this scurvy and disastrous time that Belgium should have first found her way to the general imagination of these countries through the waste redness of war. Peace was her whole being. For eighty years, trusting to the good faith of Europe, she had pursued an economical evolution without parallel. For national defence she had relied on that most solemn treaty of the nineteenth century. Even a little time ago, even since Agadir, her army, although unsuspectedly alert in technique, was still a jest of vaudeville. In temper and fibre, the Belgian people was the least militarist on the Continent. It is true that in recent years, wise foreseeing men of arms and men of politics, troubled by the audacity of Prussian apostles of conquest like Bernhardi, had begun to take alarm. Brialmont, the great engineer, had fortified Liége against Germany, and improved the defences of Namur against France. He had also, of course, planned the new entrenched position of Antwerp, the war-capital, and incidentally provided us with the

first-class mystery of its subsequent easy fall. De Broqueville had carried a new army scheme which in due development would have given Belgium at need a million bayonets to defend her neutrality instead of three hundred thousand. King Leopold, couched like a super-spider behind his fine-drawn webs of diplomacy and finance, had made way for King Albert of the simpler gospel. But on the whole the temper of Belgium was not radically changed. When in 1912 the Kaiser, receiving General Heimburger, Governor of Liége, at Aix-la-Chapelle during manœuvres, expressed his astonishment at the improvement of the defences on the Belgo-German frontier, the latter had no stronger reply than: "Well, Majesty, we soldiers had a chance of getting something extra out of our Government, and we took it." Neither your courteous and subtle Liégois, nor your genial and abundant citizen of Brussels, nor your four-square indomitable Flamand really believed that the treaty would ever be violated, or that he would ever be called on to die for his independence.

We know now how that treaty was respected. There will be pens, and to spare, to celebrate the heroic defence of the valley of the Meuse, the stubborn withdrawal of an outmatched but unbroken army, the tide of rapine and devastation that marched with the Treaty-Breakers, the driving into exile of a gallant people, the rosary of desolation, Liége, Visé, Louvain, Termonde, Na-

mur, Ypres. For my part I should like to recall something of what Belgium was in peace, and what she did give or was in train of giving to the triumphs of civilisation.

One does not need to say anything of her treasury of art; her painters from Van Eyck to the enigmatic madness of Wierbz; her incomparable belfries, hôtels de ville and halles, testifying still to the richest municipal life of the middle ages; her cathedrals; of Bruges of the three hundred bridges —one of which the present writer has cause to remember as he was all but drowned under it—of the Castle of Bouillon, from which Godefroid went to the Holy Land to capture Jerusalem and to refuse to wear a crown of gold where his Saviour had worn a crown of thorns. Nor is there need to say anything of the ambiguous splendour of such places as Ostend, in summer a Paradise at once of children and of those no longer conspicuously childlike. Nor again, of the remote beauty and clean winds of the Ardennes. It is of the life that the Belgian nation, working on its environment, had made for itself in three generations of guaranteed peace, that I like, on this anniversary, to recall some sort of inadequate picture.

Belgium was the most thickly peopled state in Europe. In the Meuse valley, from Liége to Seraing, she possessed the most extensive manufacturing area of its size in the world, surpassing Lancashire and Massachusetts. She had a greater

length of railway line per square mile than any other country in Europe. She produced a greater value of manufactured goods *per capita* than either of her great neighbours, France and Germany, and had a larger *per capita* foreign trade. Her agriculture was so enterprising that it would have been difficult to find an untilled rood or a rood wasted on a fence, in all Flanders. Such production of wealth had generated on a large scale all the social problems characteristic of our time; and so earnest and loyal was she in her attempt to reach solutions that French writers have been found to call her, not the "cockpit," but the "social laboratory" of Europe. What is of special interest to us is that, despite the ablest Socialist and Liberal criticism, Belgium had maintained in power for a generation a Catholic Government, and was working out her problems on the basis of Catholic individualism. In all aspects to know her was for a citizen of any small nation a tonic and an inspiration. She was no Paradise assuredly; she had failed in some points in which we have succeeded, but it was impossible to look into any department of her activity without learning something worth the trouble. When it is remembered that, on the one hand, she had a duality of language, and on the other, that through flax she came into intimate touch with North-east Ulster, the interest of her life for an Irishman is obviously enhanced.

Coal, "the bread of manufacturing industry,"

was, of course, the basis of Belgian prosperity. In her black country, the "borinage" centred on Mons. She employed 150,000 miners, raised 24,000,000 tons of coal per annum, and consumed almost that quantity in her factories and homes. I have an eerie recollection of climbing the belfry of Mons some years ago, and picking out, or persuading myself that I had suceeeded in picking out, the battlefields about it: Malplaquet, Jemappes, Fontenoy, Ligny. A Frenchman on the same errand asked dreamily: "When will there be another?" Alas! we can answer that question now: the "borinage" has taken another full draught of Irish blood.

This precious natural possession of coal Belgium certainly utilises to the full. Her mining country, unhappily, had all the sordor that seems inseparable from that enterprise. Mons had an admirable School of Commerce and Industry. Its watchword was expansion and expatriation. The device may sound strange in our ears; what it means to convey, of course, is that Belgium must find markets abroad. She trains her sons not to be lost to her, but to go abroad and open new fields of conquest for her industries. There was also an unusual dispensary which treated the miners for an endemic complaint called "miner's worm," or more learnedly, ankylostomiasis.

The metal industries, of course, centre on Liége. There was no more wonderful sight, not in Pitts-

burg, not on the Clyde, than the pillars of smoke and the pillars of fire which stream upwards from the steel foundries and factories along the Meuse. It was a singular pride to remember that the whole first impulsion of that great industry proceeded from the brain of an Irishman, John Cockerill. It is known that until 1825, it was, under English law, a criminal offence, punishable by transportation, for a skilled workman to emigrate to a foreign country, or for anyone to export machinery or plans. William Cockerill, however, took the risk, went first to Sweden, where he was ill received, and afterwards to Verviers. He founded the machine woollen industry of Verviers, and his son John, in due course, founded the metal industry of Liége and its belt of towns. The lives of the Cockerills would make a romantic chapter: I am sorry that I have not been able to come on much biographical matter. Obtaining a good deal more iron ore, chiefly from her neighbour, Luxembourg, than she produced herself, Belgium, before the war, reached an annual output of about a million and a half tons each of pig-iron and steel. She made all sorts of machinery and had an immense export of all. I have a vivid memory of a visit to the great Fabrique Nationale (F.N.) at Herstal. The figures of production per day were given to us as something like 800 Browning automatic pistols, 500 Mauser rifles, 400 fowling-pieces, 150 bicycles, 50 motor-bicycles and 10 motor-cars.

These two latter items had probably greatly increased. Your guide took great pleasure in dazing you with the degree of specialisation practised. Thus it took 350 special machines or tools to make a Browning, and something like 700 to make a Mauser. If all the plant of Herstal and its neighbouring towns is in German hands, it will be seen that their invasion of Belgium gave them something more even than an opportunity of running murder as a national pastime.

Ghent as a textile city owes its importance mainly to cotton. But both there and at Courtrai linen possessed a keener interest for an Irishman. Ghent possesses the two largest linen-spinning installations in the world. Between these two places and North-east Ireland there was the closest intercourse, and it would have been an interesting exercise to have made a detailed study of the Ulster colony that lived there. Cases were not unknown of the dourest North of Ireland buyers intermarrying with Flemish Catholic families, and ultimately suffering absorption. Lace was, of course, a notable product. It will be remembered that certain enquiries disclosed the fact some years ago that Belgian skill was equal to the fabrication, not only of Brussels and Malines, but also of "Limerick" and "Carrickmacross" lace, chiefly for the American market.

Of the progressive character of agriculture some indication has been given. It is curious that whilst

South Germany, Denmark, and even Hungary have been ransacked for models by various Irish propagandists, Belgian agriculture, which was not inferior either in technique or in organisation, was almost ignored. Much of the land is, as with us, rather a manufactured article than a natural product; rich polders stolen from the sea, or sand made fertile by irrigation. If one were to touch on any special point in agriculture, it would be the complete success which Belgium had made of the beet. She produced all her own sugar, including that used in her great brewing industry, and exported great quantities as well.

The productive apparatus of Belgium was assuredly rich and varied. And each industry fed and maintained itself by an educational institute of the first order. Mons has been mentioned. There was also the University of Liége, mainly an engineering University; the great Commercial School of Antwerp, the Agricultural Laboratories at Louvain and Ghent, the Higher School of Textiles at Verviers, and so on. And all this was done at "the cross-roads of Europe," under the fire of French and German competition, without recourse to any really protectionist tariffs.

But however dominant a factor intensity of production may be, it is rather the attitude of a people towards the problems of distribution that marks it out as, in a human point of view, a success or a failure: Belgium was beyond doubt a success.

Not that she had abolished poverty: there was poverty more drab and hopeless in some parts of her countryside than anything of our congested districts. There was the old plague of cheap gin almost everywhere.

But she was facing her social task in the right temper. The Belgian in economic affairs is by nature a realist and an appeasable man. In the number of days per worker lost through labour disputes, Belgium was easily at the foot of the list of industrial countries. "The Social Question," they repeat after Colins, "is to be settled by science, not by violence." Time and again the central labour committees, Socialist as well as Catholics, have suppressed strikes inaugurated by their own members. This realism of outlook gave you in Belgium the supreme type of business-like politics. The great Socialist co-operatives of Brussels and Ghent—the "Maison du Peuple" and the "Voormit"—starting from ludicrously small beginnings, bestrode the world of workers like a Colossus. If you were an associate, they sold you your clothes, boots, bread, meat, beer, furniture, books, amusements—everything you consumed—and managed your business as well as gave you free their propagandist papers, and an annual bonus out of the profits, in order to sweeten the principles proposed. The smaller Catholic organisations in the cities acted on similar lines. In the country the great Catholic "Boerenbond," or Land League, with its

headquarters at Louvain, applied the same formula to the buying and selling of agricultural necessaries on a great scale. Such a phenomenon as empty extremism could not arise.

These immense co-operatives were, perhaps, the most characteristic Belgian contribution to social readjustment. But in direct action by the State they had also been pioneers. The first experiment in Old Age Pensions did not come from Germany —formerly the worshipped idol of English Liberals and Tariff Reformers alike. It came from the city of Ghent. The first experiment in the deliberate building of "workmen's dwellings" as such was not made in Mülhausen, it was made in Verviers. The whole body of Belgian law regulating economic life is expounded in two masterly volumes issued from Louvain by Father Vermeersh, the Jesuit, who so bravely exposed the early atrocities in the Congo. (Perhaps it is as well to interpolate here that if the crimes were great, the amendment has been complete. On the same terms it would be possible to forgive all the sins of history.) The intervention of formal law is not quite as comprehensive as it is in these countries. But it helps the worker at all his crises: birth, marriage, accident, disease, old age. In one respect at least it is far superior to our code: property in small parcels is much more readily accessible to the labourer. This is accomplished by exemption of workmen's home sites and garden plots from

various heads of taxation, and by the provision of cheap loans. It will be found in the end that this accessibility to land, to land in fee-simple, is the real solution of half our labour difficulties, and the real counter-programme to Socialism. And the nation that pioneered it will enjoy deserved honour. Like other Latin countries Belgium has what we, to our shame, have not: a Homestead and Household Protection Act, the only bulwark against usury.

As to the particular points in which Belgian experience may enlighten ours, there is one which ought to be mentioned. Cheap fee-simple land for industrial workers plus cheap railways, has done a great deal to break the isolation of country and town, and to solve housing difficulties. There is also a distinct human gain. Your industrial worker who grows his own vegetables on his own land is a very different man from the unit of your propertyless proletariat. The railway policy of Belgium is generally misunderstood. In the first instance, only the main lines are owned by the State; in the second, the complaint that the State Railways "do not pay" misses the whole essence of the matter. They are not run as dividend-producing concerns; they are run as one of the fundamental public utilities. Roads used to "pay"; now they are paid for out of the public purse. Who complains? The Belgian State Railways did certainly not lose money; further, their policy was not controlled by the neces-

sity of making it directly. Railways so conducted yield a diffused national dividend of utility, the value of which is incalculable.

A further token of this firm handling of the tangles of everyday life is to be found in the work done in the School of Social Sciences at Louvain. I had not much opportunity of studying its courses, but I fancy that Father Corcoran, the distinguished Jesuit educationist, would know all about it. It is likely that he derived from it the idea of the Leo Guild. In Belgium, at all events, it was a thing of course that a priest should be not an economist —a poor title and quality—but a trained healer of economic disease. The activity manifested under the inspiration of the Church was extremely rich, and diversified. And not only in Flanders, but also in Wallonie. I have a list showing for the little Walloon town of Soignies, a town of 9000 inhabitants, no less than fifteen different Catholic economic societies. Nobody can ever have gone to Mass in Belgium without contributing at the door his "denier scolaire" for the education of poor children, or without seeing the Catholic Young Guards, engaged in some of their manifestations. Priests in Belgium would tell you that their success is due to the care with which they have avoided every hint of "clericalism." At all events, a Catholic Government has been able in one of the freest countries in Europe to maintain, and at the

last election, to strengthen, its position against all assaults. It used to be said that the industrialisation of the Campine—now agricultural, but rich in coal as yet unmined—would ultimately put Socialism in the saddle. The war has intervened. Who will venture to cast a horoscope now?

The language situation in Belgian was well known to Irish readers. Indeed the compliment was returned. The last paper I remember looking at before the German column under Van Boehm wheeled by Ghent was a copy of *Ons Land*. It contained excellent photographs of prominent Gaelic League personages, with an account of the movement in Ireland. In Flanders, the position is a sort of transposition of ours into another key. The Flamand is in a majority of nine to eight. He presents, although a Catholic, a marked temperamental resemblance to our typical Protestant Ulsterman. So far as one could judge he has pretty well had his own way in all points except one. His language will live side by side with French, but it can hardly hope, or even desire, to displace the lingua franca of civilisation. By the way, it was interesting to notice the Pro-German articles in some of the Flemish papers even after the invasion. The Germans, it was said, were first cousins of the Flemings, Teutons like them, solid, pious, religious people, not like the atheistical Walloons and French! I am afraid that the burning zeal of the

Germans towards their kinsmen was too lamentably literal for that campaign to succeed. But it is well known that German agents have been promising the Flamands an autonomous Flanders, under the eagle of Berlin . . . after the annexation. Certain journalists lately addressed a manifesto to King Albert. They received a cold and dignified answer, to the effect that the first task of the Belgian nation was to recover Belgium, and all Belgium; afterwards the nation would settle its own future. The most interesting by-product of the conflict of tongues in Belgium is one that will certainly not be repeated here. In the Marolles—the Coombe, so to say, of Brussels—the necessities of daily intercourse have produced a mixture of French and Flemish which has developed strong individuality. One heard songs in it which cannot be described by any candid person as being funny without being vulgar. The linguistic future of Belgium will, no doubt, be worked out on a basis of equality. The clash was never charged with any political menace; after the war separation of any deep kind would be unimaginable. Belgium, said King Albert, has lost everything except her soul. Is it not even true that, for the first time, she has found her soul? As the poet, Antoine Classe, phrased it—

"Flamands, Walloons,
Ne sont que des prénoms,
Belge est notre nom de famille."

In literature, written in French, Brussels is to Paris something as Dublin is to London. The same gibes at the "Brussels Brogue," the same uneasy and all but indignant tremor when a great Belgian writer steps on the scene, the same grudged applause, finally the same adulation. It is a notable fact that most of the Belgians who have planted conquering banners in French literature are of Flemish stock—Maeterlinck, Verhaeren, Rodenbach, Cammaerts. Their imagination is coloured by two traditions. Of Maeterlinck one need say nothing. Verhaeren is certainly one of our supreme living poets, perhaps the supreme poet of our civilisation. Rodenbach, more local, is for ever part of the beauty and sadness of Bruges. Cammaerts is known by his exquisite songs. Camille Lemonnier, the painter and author, is perhaps the most vital and abundant representative of the Walloon stream of influence.

Such is an inadequate outline, a cinema survey of the work and the place of Belgian in time of peace. Such was the little, great nation that William the Treaty-Breaker has violated and ravaged. When one remembers it all—memory on golden memory, remembers the black ruins where a year ago men laboured and prayed at peace with other men, remembers the slow building-up and the sudden devastation, eighty years gone in a fortnight—does not the heart harden against these metaphysi-

cal barbarians of Prussia? Belgium to-day is the most illustrious evicted tenant of modern history. But, her enemies put down, she will return. *Vive la Belgique!*

"G.H.Q."

THERE is a certain magic in initial letters, and they seem to be most magical when they run in trinities. Who has not heard of the G.O.M. and B.M.G and A.B.C. and G.B.S. and that R.I.P. which has a richer gloom than even Raleigh's forlorn *Hic Jacet?* But in this war the greatest of all is G.H.Q.

G.H.Q. stands for General Headquarters, known to most newspaper readers as the place where the telegrams come from to depress or to cheer us. But they have a great deal more to do at G.H.Q. than merely to receive messages from the fighting front, and to send them home. Having had the privilege of paying a visit there within the last ten days, I can realise that fact with the vivid actuality of a thing seen. If the Commander-in-Chief and his General Staff are the brain of an army, cerebellum and cerebrum, G.H.Q. supplies its nervous and motor system. Nerves, efferent and afferent, carrying in thrills of sensation and carrying out waves of movement to the extreme limits of the military organism, muscles in association with the nerves—these make up G.H.Q.

Let me detail some of its activities.

When you export an army you have got to export

with it a government. Our army in France is to all intents and purposes a colony in arms, with a purely male population larger than the total population of New Zealand. G.H.Q. is at once its Westminster and its War Office; its railway—from booking-office to clearing-house—and its Bank; its Scotland Yard and its Harley Street; its tinker, tailor, butcher, baker and candlestick-maker.

In Pantheistic philosophies all things issue from a central principle, and all return to it. G.H.Q. is the Om of the East, the Absolute of that cloudy rhetorician from Berlin whom we used to call a philosopher, Hegel. Without G.H.Q. nothing; with G.H.Q. everything.

It is not a bad description of war to say that it consists in carrying heavy things from one place to another, and that victory depends on carrying them faster and more efficiently than the enemy. The heavy things may be soldiers, rifles, bully beef, howitzers, cartridges, hospital appliances, shells, or a score of other things indispensable. That is the reason why the first aspect of war that impresses one is transportation. From London to the front there is a line of troop trains, transports and convoys, linked together very nigh as closely as the boats in a pontoon bridge. Behind the whole of the front every road, railway and canal is scheduled.

On any road traffic must proceed in only one prescribed direction. If by any mischance you find yourself heading the other way, the first military

policeman will very abruptly let you know all about it.

A line, at once elastic and unbreakable, carries our resolve from the centre of formation here to the point of contact in the trenches. It goes *ohne Hast* and *ohne Rast,* to borrow Teutonisms that were once more popular than they are likely ever to be again. No hurry, but no intermission of effort, that is the motto and practice of G.H.Q. The picturesque, bloody and heroic phases of war are praised everywhere and fire the imagination. But consider to yourself how our army would get on without its Carter Paterson! Its Carter Paterson is G.H.Q.

G.H.Q. has got to see that things are carried, and it sees that they are. The foolish French Minister of War told a misled nation in 1870 that there was not a button missing from the gaiter of a soldier. That boast, so mad and disastrous, is to-day for our Expeditionary Force the "frigid and calculated" truth. The soldiers say to you all over the lines: "Anything you send arrives. Nothing goes wrong." There are many others to praise as well as the Olympians of G.H.Q.—the chauffeur mending his tyre with lyrical profanity *faute de mieux,* the mechanic sweating behind the scenes at Boulogne or Calais, Mr. Tennant, Lord Kitchener —but, without G.H.Q. nothing.

They clothe themselves with all varieties of function. There is the A.G. (Adjutant-General), who

does everything, and, when he gets tired, does something else for a change. There is the I.O. (Intelligence Officer), who sees that every visitor is passed through an infinite succession of sieves, lest he should prove to be a spy. There is the Provost-Marshal, the Chairman of the Prison Commissioners of the Battlefield. There is the Chief Engineer. There is the R.A.M.C. There is the Casualty Clearing Station. There is the Field Cashier. There is the R.T.O. (Railway Transportation Officer, who, if he does not like the look of you, sets you emulating Puck in the rapidity of your return. There is . . . What is there not?

G.H.Q. is an army, a government, an administration, a literature. You see those who wield its sceptre going about a French provincial town, yawning down deserted boulevards strewn with the debris of autumn, smoking in bare French rooms with green jalousies, always unperturbed, always efficient, always courteous, generally bored. You see them walking arm-in-arm, or in the saddle, knee to knee, with French staff officers, maintaining and deepening the Alliance. Some of them have tunics beribboned with the record of five campaigns; some are raw boys; but, all together, they keep the fight going. They are the Business Organisers of the war.

Now that the news of our advance is coming hotly in, they will praise bullets and bayonets.

Mike O'Leary's and General Fochs; but when one comes to think of it, it is hard on G.H.Q. that the patient, continuous infallibility which had not yet left a section, or even an individual soldier, short of bread, beef, cartridges or medical care should be left out of the picture.

"ZUR ERINNERUNG"

A LETTER TO AN AUSTRIAN FELLOW-STUDENT

In Unconquered France

MY DEAR FRANZ,

That was the familiar device you wrote in the book you gave me when twelve years ago we drank our final Bruderschaft at Innsbruck station. I was saying good-bye to your Alpenrose, your Rose of the Alps, where the great mountains spring up their ten and fourteen thousand feet out of the very pavements, where the Golden Roof glitters over its antique arcades, where the great bronze warriors guard the sleep of your Emperor Max, where Andreas Hofer fought the good fight against an imperial tyrant, where inns, old before the French Revolution, all but touch gables across the narrow, immemorial *gassen*. You wanted me to remember all that, but most of all, I think, you wanted me to remember the quiet valleys, full of colour and peace, the red cupolaed churches where we went to Mass at four o'clock of a Sunday morning, the mountains we conquered together, with their summit air that we thought better than wine, until we came back, leg-weary if heart-high, in the evening to drink your thin country vintage,

and applaud the zither-players and the amazing Tyrolese dancers. When I was last in your Tyrol I did not see you, Franz: you had gone to Berlin to study philology, that characteristic pseudo-science which Nietzsche and your Prussians have transformed into a seed-bed of criminal philosophies.

Those good days of our youth are worse than dead, a rivulet lost in the salt sea of estrangement that has engulfed so many friendships and so much happiness. We have other things to remember. Two years ago your Austria drove a sword into the heart of Europe. The agony of simple men then initiated still continues. I wonder where that damnable, recurrent date found you this midsummer? Fighting against that *Italia irredenta* with which you used to sympathise so generously? Falling back before that Russia which you used to agree with me in regarding as the chosen home of great novels and profound religion? In the lines against France, that France which shaped and nourished the soul of every free soul in Teutondom —and they have not been many—from Heine to your own tragic Empress? There is another possibility which I had almost forgotten. No Man's Land, or, as one had better call it, Dead Man's Land, is no great width at the point we hold. Just as I am here swallowing chalk and clay, consorting with rats and lesser forms of obscene life, mixing with wounds and blood, so may you be over

there. I look across the long grass, lush with disintegrating corpses, and imagine that Prussia may have laid hold of you for other pursuits than philology. Perhaps it is you whose machine-gun taps every night like a devil-ridden typewriter against this particular area of our parapet?

You will agree with me, even now, that war, if not Hell, is cousin to it, cousin German. To condemn humanity to pass through that chamber of torture is a decision so grave and terrible that even emperors might well tremble before it. In the lineaments of the obscurest man slain in battle stands written the judgment of the rulers of the earth. Can your Austria face her conscience? I know that at the question you will be disposed to parry with a gibe at "English self-righteousness." But, as it happens, I am not English, and mere self-righteousness does not survive the ordeal of battle. Living through this nightmare of blood you cannot but ask yourself how it began. The diplomatic correspondence is there to answer the question. These documents, the most memorable in secular history, are the charter of justification behind every decree of death that passes from the Allied lines to yours. Your Austria had grounds, tragical grounds, of complaint against some Serbians: you sought not justice, but the destruction of Serbian independence. You leagued yourself with Prussia —that blood-and-iron-monger—to break the faith of Europe and the homes of Belgium. You have

heard all this before? You will hear it again, till the end of time. Not all the babbling savants of Berlin can ever erase the record of those two bully's blows. They are the Alpha and the Omega of the war. Of course, it is true that there were other forces behind this reversion to violence and barbarism. All the explosive sediment of history was behind it, but it was your touch on the trigger that released all that imprisoned damnation.

Your natural place was not with Prussia. You, who were once the master, are now the valet of Germanism. You had not elaborated through forty years a religion of murder. Like us Irish, you were perhaps more fascinating than successful; you were a nation of gentlemen. You had grace, delicacy and honour. You listened to the crowned commercial traveller from Potsdam, who promised you a short war and a golden guerdon of trade. We know now that it was he who forced your hand in the Serbian negotiations. To be allured by such a bribe is no new sin in our experience; every nation of the Alliance, at some time or other in the bad past, has fallen in similar wise. Does it seem to you that Mephistopheles is in the way of keeping his promise? I notice in your newspapers that your people are impressed by the area of enemy territory you occupy. The present truth of the military situation is that you occupy only as a detected burglar "occupies" the house he has attempted to rifle—that is to say, pending the arrival of the po-

lice. And, Franz, the police, although as usual somewhat slow, have arrived. There is no doubt of that.

It seems to me quite candidly that the time has come to separate Habsburg from Hohenzollern. We are willing to believe that you acted under duress. During the war you have not befouled your name beyond forgiveness: no Cavell or Fryatt looms up in judgment against you. Your base and cynical over-lord, having compelled you to a gamble in blood, now begins to exhibit the nakedness of soul of every cut-throat cut-purse who finds that he has caught a Tartar. I do not know that any deep hatred of Austria is nourished by anyone in the Allied countries who understands the inner economy of the Central Empires. A *locus pœnitentiæ* will not be refused you. Come back to the civilisation to which you belong. Make it possible for me once again to renew our old Bruderschaft in Innsbruck, and to rejoice together that the Twilight of the Gods of Cruelty has deepened into enduring night.

SILHOUETTES FROM THE FRONT

I.—THE WAY TO THE TRENCHES

THEY have a saying among the followers of Mohammed, "Shun him who has thrice made the pilgrimage to Mecca, the Holy City! His conversation is an offence." It is, indeed, the vice of travellers that they will talk. No man is safe from us if only we have been anywhere he has not been —from Birr, as the song says, to Bareilly. But the temptation of the trenches is the most formidable of all. Who has resisted it? Raw and ripe we have each of us tried to daub his own picture of that amazing fact, of the strange shifts and incredible devisings to which civilised nations have been forced to resort in order to save civilisation. One brush will add a stroke that escapes another. All the brushes and books, and all the cinema films together will never come near the reality. That is the sole rationale of these thumb-nail silhouettes.

If you were to ask any patron of the present Continental tour for his first impression, he would probably note the excellence of the travelling arrangements. Tickets are free, or rather they are not necessary. It is impossible to miss your train: the columns of them thunder without haste and

without rest from the remotest station back at home to the ultimate railhead where their thunder dies in that of the guns. The sea-lacunæ are obliterated by an all but unbroken bridge of untorpedoed transports. Delays due to loss of luggage are unknown. You may, indeed, lose your luggage, but you do not delay. There are no tips on this journey, and it would be idle to book seats in advance. An avoidable expense, for you will get there without them. Either with a draft, a post of minor importance but yet of some; or with your battalion in all the pomp and circumstance of war; or, likely enough, in these latter days as an isolated officer reinforcement with a typed telegram and a moving order, you will arrive. Of course there are incidental divagations. With traffic rigidly scheduled and regulated as it must be, an occasional traveller is to be found who has lost his way and has perhaps accomplished ten kilometres between dawn and dusk. I met one such, and said—

"You seem to have lost your unit?"

"Lost my unit?" he replied with intense rancour. "I have lost my company, lost my battalion, lost my brigade, lost my division, my corps. A little more and I shall have lost the b——y British Expeditionary Force."

Indubitably it is the perfection of transportation. Napoleon said, or is supposed to have said, that an army, like a snake, moves on its belly. The truth is, of course, that the art of war is, as to six-sevenths

of it, the art of carrying heavy things from one place to another. You have got to move obvious necessaries, such as food and fuel and housing-timber and spare clothes; and human frames—that to marching men are heavier at the end of a long day than anything in the world; and rifles, bayonets and bombs, the ultimate *ratio decidendi* of all operations; and shells that look like death, and weigh as much as a model bungalow; and frowning Frankensteins of guns that look like the Day of Judgment, and weigh as much as a small foundry; and the wounded who come back with the Cross, steeped in blood, to stand as a fit symbol of their sacrifice. But you must move a great deal that is less obvious and more necessary. When you export an army such as ours, which is in reality a nation and not a small one, you must send with it a government. Now knowledge, and the administrative body in which it expresses itself, is of all things the most difficult to export. This scheme of transportation is the first miracle of sheer brain-power that strikes you, but it is not the greatest. I do not scruple to say that as a study in government, that is to say, in the efficient conduct of human things in the mass, the present army, as organised through G.H.Q., is far more impressive than most civil constitutions.

I do not speak merely of the actual Higher Command. Your heads of that must carry all the apparatus of all its range from minor tactics to mili-

tary statesmanship. Note, rather, then, when you send an army you must send a Treasury, a General Post Office, a Judiciary and Record Office, and one hardly knows what beside. Your quartermaster-general has got to be the Selfridge of six million gaily grumbling customers, who are perpetually on the move. A mere battalion quartermaster must possess qualities that would win a fortune in a large suburban shop.

And it is possible to overlook the service of information—the signallers. Everywhere the army goes it lays behind it a tentacular network of news-carrying wire. The arm of its reporting power is indefinitely longer than that of any Associated Press. From the company dug-out in the front trench to Sir Douglas Haig, and from him to Whitehall, there is no gap. On the earth, beneath it and above, this nerve-system extends: aeroplane, observation balloon, patrol, vedette, sniping-post, all collect their varying toll of fact and surmise; electricity, drilled to the use of the men who wear the blue-and-white bands, vibrates it on to its destination. And so is this particular area of the army cerebrum kept alive and alert. I have hardly spoken of the A.S.C., of the endless chain of supply that for ever runs and returns on its infallible cogs about the roads and railways.

There are other, many other, things to admire as patterns of organisation. It is what our subalterns, with their strict and shy economy of speech,

describe as a "great show." All the world has heard of carrying on. But it was first of all necessary to carry. And we have carried to war across the seas not a mere army, but a people in arms.

SILHOUETTES FROM THE FRONT

II.—The Long Endurance

In the history of war, especially as it was practised by the Irish regiments, we have been accustomed to the brief ecstasy of assault, the flash of bayonets, the headlong avalanche of death and victory. . . . Often there had been, before this sharp decision, the heroism of a long march. But in general, instantaneity had been the characteristic of Irish soldiers as it is of Irish football forwards. There are instances enough of the old quality in this war from Festubert to Suvla Bay, from Loos to that shell-powdered sinister terrain over which the Ulster Division swept in its great charges. But there is another heroism. The three chapters of this war may well bear for rubrics: the Grim Retreat, the Long Endurance, the Epic Push. It is of the second that I write here.

Note that this, the greatest, is also the dullest of all recorded campaigns. It is wrong, indeed, to call it a campaign or even a series of campaigns: one had better style it the Wall-paper War. Everywhere the same type and development of fighting, the same pattern repeated and indefinitely repeated. It is true that the walls are the walls of

the world, and the colours are those of life and death. None the less the effect on the mind is that of near bigness, which is always of its nature wearisome. It is not of that weariness of the detached mind that I now write, but of the more intimate and crushing fatigue of the actual man on the spot. There may very well be units of this immense army that on their return home will have apparently little to show for their lost blood.

People will say to them—

"I suppose you were in the dash at X? No? Oh, it was the capture of Y? I mean, of course, the round-up at Z?"

And they will answer rather dully—

"No. We just held on. We are the lot that just stuck to A, and weren't shifted out of B."

And the response will be a disappointed and belittling "Oh yes!"

But, when it is understood, this long endurance will be seen to be something very notable in itself, and, more than that, an essential element in the slow and great victory. Movements are picturesque, but in order that something should move it was necessary that something should stand still. The ends of a lever move effectively only when it is based on an unmoving fulcrum. If the rivet of a scissors did not stand fast, the blades would cut little. And the tale of the units to whom it came merely to hold the line is the great tale.

In the trenches it is the day-by-dayness that tells

and tries. It is always the same tone of duty: certain days in billets, certain days in reserve, certain days in the front trench. One is reminded of those endless chains by which some well-buckets are worked, except that nothing or very little ever seems to come up in the bucket to pay the labour of turning. General Joffre as grignotard is one of the phrase-makers of the war. But this nibbling process works both ways. We nibble; they nibble. They are nibbled; we are nibbled. A few casualties every turn, another grating of the saw-teeth of death and disease, and before very long a strong unit is weak. And, of course, the nerve-strain is not slight. Everybody going up to the trenches from the C. O. down to the last arrival in the last draft knows it to be moral certainty that there are two or three that will not march back. Everybody knows that it may be anybody. In the trenches death is random, illogical, devoid of principle. One is shot not on sight, but on blindness, out of sight. You feel that a man who is hit has had worse luck than a golfer whose opponent holes out in one at a blind hole. Yet these things do happen. Very few people are hit by lightning, and in a storm it is a comfort to remember this. But some people are hit by lightning. Here one is in a place where a very trivial piece of geographical bad luck may be fatal. There is much to nibble the nerves.

One likes to image this whole task of holding

the line under the image of a sentry-group. This is not to depreciate any other man or any other function. From colonel down all the world here has the same job. The sentry-group is the symbol. A figure in khaki stands on the shelf of fire-bag, his steel helmet forming a serious bulge over the parapet as he peers through the night towards the German lines. His comrade sits on the shelf beside him waiting to help, to report, to carry the gas-alarm, the alarm of an attack. Over there in front across No Man's Land there are shell-holes and unburied men. Strange things happen there. Patrols and counter-patrols come and go. There are two sinister fences of barbed wire, on the barbs of which blood-stained strips of uniform and fragments more sinister have been known to hang uncollected for a long time. The air is shaken with diabolical reverberations; it is stabbed with malign illumination as the Véry lights shoot up, broaden to a blaze, and go out. This contrast of night and light and gloom is trying to the eyes. The rifle-grenades and trench-mortars, flung at short range, that scream through the air are trying to the ears. They may drop a traverse away, and other men not charged for the moment with his duty may seek shelter. But not he. Strange things issue from No Man's Land, and the eyes of the army never close or flinch. And so, strained, tense and immovable he leans and looks forward into the night of menace.

But the trench has not fallen. As for him, he carried his pack for Ireland and Europe, and now pack-carrying is over.

He has held the line.

SILHOUETTES FROM THE FRONT

III.—Rhapsody on Rats

What first strikes one in a trench is, contrary to report, not the Rat but the Slat. A trench-board is a sort of ladder, laid horizontally along a ditch of ill repute, and the rungs of this ladder are the slats. It is true that if this ladder were set upright it would be impossible to climb it, for the slats are too close together. Nevertheless, it has the form and aspirations of a ladder, and yearns towards the vertical. To follow the windings of the trench, this board is of necessity made in short sections. Now, one often enters a trench in the dark. Certain short boards have been displaced by the outgoing unit. An incautious foot, with, say, fifteen stone avoirdupois behind it, is set on one end, and the perpendicular ambition of the trench-board manifests itself in a jarring wallop of the other end on one's tin hat. The slat decidedly strikes you.

It is unpleasant to walk on, as anybody who has ever laboriously evaded coal-cellar gratings will realise. It exists in numbers that have never been counted. You can walk from the North Sea to the foot-hills of the Alps with the soles of your boots continuously beslatted, save where there is

an odd broken board which there has not been time to repair. At the end of the war there will probably be slat-excursions organised by American tourist companies—they are said to have already purchased the ground—with the privilege to each pilgrim of removing one slat as a souvenir. What is to be said for them is that they stand between you and a flounder along the bottom mud. In winter, when the drainage improvisations prove false, and the fighting ditches run hip-high, the foothold is to be valued. And now as to the rats.

Ratavia, as one may designate it, resembles China in that there has never been a census of its population, but that it approximates to the mathematical infinite. They are everywhere—large rats, small rats, bushy rats, shy rats and impudent, with their malign whiskers, their obscene eyes, loathsome all the way from overlapping teeth to kangaroo tail. You see them on the parades and the shelter-roofs at night, slinking along on their pestiferous errands. You lie in your dug-out, famished, not for food (that goes without saying), but for sleep, and hear them scurrying up and down their shafts, nibbling at what they find, dragging scraps of old newspapers along, with intolerable cracklings, to bed themselves. They scurry across your blankets and your very face. Nothing suppresses their numbers. Not dogs smuggled in in breach of regulations. Not poison, which most certainly ought not to be used. Not the revolver-

practice in which irritated subalterns have been known to indulge. Men die and rats increase.

I see just one defence that they can make: it was not they who invaded our kingdom, but we who invaded theirs. We descended, we even dug ourselves down to their level. It is true that in our heroic moments we may style the trenches the New Catacombs to which freedom descended for a while to return in triumph. But it is also true that they are rat-holes, rat-avenues, rat-areas. The dramatic translation of an old period was called "The Birds"; the dramatisation of this must be called "The Rats." Strangely enough, it has been left for me to tell the decisive chapter of the inner history of the war. Kaiser Wilhelm, whose resemblance to a rat has been too little noticed—you have but to take the wax out of his moustache and allow it to droop—was seated in his ugly palace at Potsdam, considering his ultimatum to Serbia, when there suddenly appeared before him, down the chimney or out of some diplomatic orifice in the panelling, a Rat, the master and pattern of all rats. "Majesty!" said he, "I am come to offer you my aid in this war which you are planning. As you are the Emperor of all the Germans, so am I the Emperor of all the Rats. Our interests coincide."

They conferred together very shrewdly, and struck an alliance. "Good!" said his Majesty, slapping his thigh. "It is decided. We are with-

one-another-firmly-united. The war will begin forthwith."

So the great quintessential Super-Rat, the Rattish *Ding an sich,* left to mobilise his forces, and the Kaiser drew over a sheet of paper and wrote the magical and black word that unlocks Hell. And the great rat called in his Austria, which is the louse, and his Turkey, which is the sand-flea, and his Bulgaria, which is that porter of poison, the fly. So the battle was joined between the clean and the obscene.

It must be said for the Kaiser that with this one ally he kept faith. Ratavia has increased enormously in population and prosperity. It has suffered from no menace of famine, for Wilhelm, the faith-keeper, has even sacrificed his own subjects generously in order to avert that calamity.

But the end is not yet. The Emperor of the Rats will come once again to Potsdam.

"Majesty!" he will say. "I am a student of Treitschke, who teaches that an alliance is to be kept by the stronger of two associates only as long as his profit lies that way." And as Majesty, shrivelled, decaying with the pallor of death on him, trembles in his chair the Great Rat will add—

"I propose to annex you."

THE NEW FRANCE

MADAME CAILLAUX, who was formerly an actress, has achieved in real life her most remarkable dramatic success. Like Emerson's Lexington farmer, she has certainly fired a shot heard round the world. The assassination of a great political editor by the wife of a powerful minister has recalled to us in a lurid flash the monstrous vanities and violences that raven behind the polite exterior of civilisation. It has given a good many other editors a peg on which to hang a new array of reproachful platitudes. But its effect on the immediate course of politics in France is likely to be of trivial importance. There will be a loud momentary splash, and a wide-going rush of ripples, but it will be found to have been no more than a stone flung into a river already swollen and hurrying to an ambiguous issue. Personal scandals and tragedies are not allowed to disturb that battle of ideas which is the essential life of the Republic. It will be noted that Madame Caillaux' automatic pistol did not purchase for her husband a respite of even twenty hours. The day following, M. Barthou brought the attack into the Chamber to a head by reading the letter of M. Fabre, the Public Prosecutor; the Rochette enquiry has been not delayed,

but expedited, and the electoral struggle comes on with even more headlong rapidity. Making all discount for the error of vision, characteristic of the foreign observer, we are able to say with assurance that the programmes submitted for the approaching election mark the most serious attempt made since the war of 1870 to re-establish France in her traditions.

One may aptly compare France, as a contemporary compared Parnell, to a granite rock overlaid with a shallow drift of detritus. In politics, especially in Parliament, the most distracting flurries of dust succeed and displace one another with a sort of constant inconstancy. Penetrate them, and you come upon an economic and social fabric characterised by massive stability. Nobody who bears this in mind will be blinded by whatever chances to be the latest sand-storm. *La nouvelle France* was not abolished by the political manœuvre that placed M. Doumergue at the head of the State. It remains, and it grows stronger. This new France means the birth into the moral order of Europe of a fresh and strong reality. What had been for many years a mere vision, glimmering through banked clouds, has become a tangible and habitable fact. The election of President Poincaré, accepted on all sides as the token of a profound change of spirit, has not in its results belied the prophets. Now, beyond all doubt, deference must be paid to the tradition which regards the

French as an instantaneous, and, so to say, hair-trigger people. Formulæ seem to change as rapidly as fashions; and the possibility of return to a period of Saturday-to-Monday ministers has not yet been banished to the limbo of the ridiculous. Allowance must be made for the swiftness, the genius for falling into line, the brief passions of unanimity so "temperamental" to the Republic. But at the end of the account the change has lost nothing of its impressiveness. It is a true, not a false dawn.

M. Poincaré stands for many things: it is no mere flourish of words to say that through him France heard and obeyed the call of her past. She deliberately reverted to her origins, and her traditional sources of strength. The new France put itself to school to old France. Intellect, family tradition, gracious manners, thrift, minute industry, a certain austere discipline of thought, and with all that an immense cheerfulness, able to *ça ira* itself out of any desperate pass—such was *la douce France* of M. René Bazin and of history. The folly must not be imputed to me of supposing that the election of President Poincaré restored, or will restore, that submerged world. But that is the atmosphere evoked by his personality. The good M. Dupont and that amiable plumpness, M. Durand, being of the earth earthy, and of Latin earth into the bargain, are in no danger of being transformed into angels of light. They will wink

and chuckle as before over their dominoes and their aperitives; they will try to anticipate each other with the latest ambiguity of the comic paper and the vaudeville. But they are none the less conscious of the new orientation, and they adapt themselves to it with a purr of satisfaction. The lines on which reconstruction proceeds are in the nature of things that are inevitable. Patriotism is once more in fashion: were Hervé to revive his brilliant dream of planting the tricolour on the dunghill he would run some risk of being planted there himself. It is, no doubt, unfortunate that the national idea should in our day find expression universally in the increasing diversion of capital from productive industry to unproductive armaments. Signs are not lacking that the excess, or rather the frenzied debauch of which Europe has in this regard been guilty, has created an impossible situation. The so-called "strike of capital" even indicates that the point has been reached at which the disease must either generate its own cure, or else kill the patient. But while your ten competitors are arming more and more heavily, it is foolish to stand in your shirt chanting the praises of a millennium which obstinately refuses to arrive. France has accepted the Three Years' Service Law; and it is certain that no ministry of the near future will dare to repeal that measure. This increase of the army by fifty per cent. is expensive: it is a defeat for the party of reason, if you will,

and a triumph for that of violence. But it is an act of sacrifice rendered necessary by events. Any possibility of repeal is ruled out by the opening of old wounds in Alsace-Lorraine. And because the Army Act must stand, the Loan must go through. On that point, doubt is inadmissible: *la nouvelle France* has made up its mind. The conditions of issue of the new Rente, its immunity or otherwise from taxation, even its amount, are questions in controversy. The discussion on them, so far as it has proceeded, has been of extreme interest as an illustration of French acumen in public finance; it may become a text-book instance in due course, and it might even be studied with profit by the financiers of the new Irish Land Act. The French Treasury has already lost by the delay, but, borrowing in its own market, it will at all events operate on better terms than any of the other borrowing nations, now clamouring for admission to it. But however details may be arranged, the fact that there must be an issue is a thing settled. The new France is, in short, possessed of the spirit of sacrifice. The patriotism that is in fashion is sincere enough to pay the piper from whom it has called the tune.

But it is in the region of ideas, rather than in that of current policy, that we must seek for the key to the future. It would be extravagant to say that the mocking hatred of Christianity has been banished, and that the vendetta against the Church

is at an end. Despite M. Briand's famous *apaisement* speech, despite the success of M. Poincaré's "national" programme, the State has not yet returned even to a position of neutrality. But the vivid colour of hope dominates the horizon. Combes-ism is no longer opposed as unjust, it is dismissed as vulgar. The boulevards may not have shed their scepticism, but at all events they recognise religion as one of the ideal forces that make men good citizens and gallant soldiers. As the army recovers its prestige there is a return to the spirit of that strange and burning remonstrance of Alexandre Dumas, the younger—

"Had I been Bazaine" (he wrote), "I would have set up a statue of the Virgin in the midst of my army on the Fifteenth of August—not because it was *Saint Napoleon* but because it was *Sainte Marie*—and I would have delivered battle against the God whom King William carries about in his pocket, behind whom he speaks like a ventriloquist, and who is not the God of battles, for the very simple reason that there is no God of battles. I would have said to my soldiers: 'My children, I place the Virgin in your midst. See in her your daughter, your betrothed, your wife, your sister, your mother. Over there is a masked "God" who menaces her with insult. Defend her! Honour her feast with a victory!' And the Germans would have been defeated. There is, there will always be, in the French soldier something of the Frank

of Clovis, something of the Crusader of Saint Louis."

The essence of truth distilled in that last sentence will more and more impose itself. If soldiers will not fight on an empty stomach, still less will they fight on an empty soul. A shrug, a sensualism, an epigram, and the "lie of religion" is shattered beyond repair: so far, so good. But with religion there has gone the whole category of the ideal. In a world from which all values have been expelled, except the values of appetite, there remains no principle of sacrifice. The only maxim which it is capable of evolving from its own resources is that of egotism, enlightened by prudence; for that *credo* men will do many things, but they will not die. Such a gospel may for a time be expounded, and even practised, by the noisy minorities who make laws and write books: the anonymous shoulders of the common people are strong enough to carry that and heavier burdens. But the peculiar weakness of any such philosophy is that it has only to be generally accepted in order to become impossible. Egotism and the pleasure-calculus will procure a brief, if not very respectable, ecstasy for the masters, as they loll in their carved and curtained litters, turning over with a languid hand the latest bibelot of selfishness. But let that point of view infect the bearers of the litter, and they will set it down with disturbing roughness. Morality begins where hedonism ends.

In France the evolution, whether conducted in the personal consciousness of a master like Bourget, or in the general mind and being, has followed the same curve to the same issue. After Renan there was but one refinement possible: M. Anatole France appeared. But the signs of dissolution have, of late, been accumulating about this specialist in *patchouli* and paganism. For instance, he has been translated into English. Anatomists like M. Michaut, whose book is one of the literary events of recent years, have made the tour of his philosophy from Dan to Beersheba, and found all barren. Through the *sociologisme* of writers like Guyau, and the *solidarité* of writers like Bourgeois, the new France has come back to the old sanities. The experiment of the passing generation consisted essentially in an attempt to live without a brain or a conscience. That experiment, it is curious to note, was pushed to its extreme by an English-writing, French-trained Irishman, Mr. George Moore. It has reached its Vale. A rhapsodist in the last issue of the *Sociological Review* bewails, but at any rate confesses, the change. It is bad enough that "reactionary" illusions like patriotism should be returning to honour. But when you find University students going to Mass—— Going on week-days. And Bergson and mysticism, construed as a tonic of action, setting the fashion.

In the field of politics, as such, the most interesting new fact is the attitude of the Conservatives.

For a long time, in the hope of discrediting the Republic, they made it a principle to support not the best but the worst Republican. A gradual process, culminating in the shock of Casablanca and Agadir, has made manifest the hopelessness of such merely negative action, if it could be called action. They have come down into the arena. President Poincaré was their first achievement. The Three Years' Law of the Barthou Ministry was their second. If at the following elections the ancient apathy and the modern *m'enfichisme,* as it is styled, can be overcome, they will reach the third, and that will be permanent. The five pistol-shots of Madame Caillaux may very well prove to have been the first effective dissipation of a slumber.

The alignment of parties is, at all events, clearer than ever before. On the one side, the Radicals and Radical-Socialists "unified" at Pau. The essential principle and foundation of this group is the existence of a state of war between the friends and enemies of the Republic. The point of view is that of Jacobinism, but for the guillotine of purification there has been substituted the administrative machine. It is understood that the "eating of curates" is the normal occupation of all adherents; but, of course, one appetite will exceed another. The better is the unappeasable enemy of the merely good—

Un pur trouve toujours un plus pur qui l'épure.

On the other side the new party of appeasement

of MM. Briand and Barthou. Its leaders and members have come to it, as to every central position, from different camps and by different routes. Hammered upon from the outside by German aggression, they demand domestic peace as the first condition of national security. They ask for a *république aérée et habitable.* They propose an army strengthened and increased through the sacrifices of the rich and the middle classes. It is a synthesis of Déroulède and Millerand, of militarism and social transformation.

M. Jaurès and his integral Socialists may, of course, be trusted to find their place among the "pacifists." The late Herr Bebel led the German Social Democrats back to an acceptance of the national idea; but not so M. Jaurès. A strategist at once bold and astute, who has never known the responsibilities of office, to whom *la patrie* is only a gunmaker's advertisement, he will almost certainly co-operate with the reorganised *bloc.*

It is for the prophets to tell us what the elections will bring forth. For us, plain onlookers, the life of the most interesting and logical nation in Europe has come to a crisis, the solution of which may notably react not only upon civilisation and humanity—those great abstractions—but upon ourselves, and the little parts we play in each.

THE SOLDIER-PRIESTS OF FRANCE

IT makes me a little proud to remember that I was one of the few writers in these countries to announce and celebrate the birth of *la nouvelle France* long before the coming of the war. For many years the Republic has been in ill repute in the Catholic world. Men thought of her as the home of Renan and scepticism, of Gambetta and anti-clericalism, of Combes — the unspeakable Combes—and persecution, of Anatole France and refined sensualism, of a score of lesser writers and plain pornography. That interpretation of her life was never true although it had elements of truth in it. Even in the old France there were two strains: there was Rabelais as well as Pascal, Montaigne as well as Bossuet, Voltaire as well as St. Francis de Sales. There is, indeed, lodged in the very mind and temper of France a seed of perilous adventure. Her courage is a constant temptation to dally with the blasphemous and the foul: her lucidity—for vague and furtive innuendoes are like a toothache to French style—doubles the offence when she lapses.

But on the other hand there was something peculiarly obnoxious in the circumstance that these attacks on France proceeded in great part from

German sources. That there were many splendid Catholics in Germany was of course true. They were strong enough in numbers and organisation to have done something finer than throw themselves into the arms of Prussianism. The failure of the Centre Party in that regard will lie as a heavy cloud on its future. But that German Catholics should have lent themselves, as they did, to a systematic denigration of France in foreign periodicals was contemptible. The truth is that every German in the modern period has become infected with the superstition that he belongs to the chosen race. Matthew Arnold—who, for the rest, did not himself believe very luminously in God—started in these countries the notion that the war of 1870 was, as he called it, the judgment of Judæa on Greece. That a Protestant God should have thus judged a country whose old title was that of "eldest daughter of the Church," was an interpretation of events peculiarly agreeable to militant Protestants both in England and Germany. But that Catholics should have assimilated such a view was remarkable. It is true that French policy played disastrously into the hands of Bismarck. Gambetta's error of anti-clericalism led from disintegration to disintegration. Bismarck has left on record statements of his reasons for embarking on the *Kulturkampf,* which for frigid wickedness of purpose cannot be equalled in political literature.

"The laurels of Sadowa and Sedan do not satisfy

my ambitions, I have a more glorious mission, that of making myself master of Catholicism."

"The enemy of Germany is Pontifical Rome. That is the danger which menaces the relations of Germany and France. If France identifies herself with Rome she constitutes herself by that fact alone the sworn enemy of Germany."

France made her mistakes, but before the war she had begun to correct and cancel them. The gradual return to fair play from the midnight bigotry of Combes to the policy of appeasement of M. Briand, and the execution of that policy by M. Poincaré was very marked in all its stages. And in the measure in which that correction of old mistakes and tyrannies is made, not only in France but under every other Allied Flag, will the coming victory repay the blood that is buying it. But that German Catholics should have held up their country before the world as a shining model, and France as an abandoned and degenerate nation, is a thing intelligible only to those who know the vanity and self-exaltation of the modern German. While they were thus fabling, who really spoke for Germany in the ear of the world? These are the Germans. Schopenhauer with his scientific pessimism, truer indeed and nobler than any light philosophy of pleasure, but profoundly anti-Christian. Treitschke, who taught that the State is above all moral laws. A line of theologians from Strauss to Harnack and his contempo-

raries, who claimed to have shredded into mere rags of myth the historical beginning of the Christian faith and fold. Nietzsche, who "transcended morality" for the individual as Treitschke had done for the State, and preached pride, pleasure and domination as the cardinal virtues. Nietzsche who wrote—

"They have said to you: Happy are the peaceful! but I say to you: Happy are the warriors, for they shall be called not the sons of Jehovah, but the sons of Odin, who is greater than Jehovah!"

Who else stood for German thought? Haeckel, whose *Riddle of the Universe* carried its vulgar "omniscience" of materialism in sixpenny editions all round the world. And the Catholic spokesmen of such a people cried out to Heaven against the country of Coppée and de Mun, of Bazin, Barrès, Bourget, Ferdinand Brunetière and all the noblest voices of our time. One trivial touch is worth adding to the picture. The Catholic Committee of Action in France has established a fact, which, indeed, was already known, namely, that great numbers of the obscene books which disgrace some bookstalls in Paris are normally printed in French in Budapest, Vienna and certain German cities.

Such was the contrast between the two peoples. The sins of France were in process of amendment. The corruptions of thought for which she was responsible had this mitigating quality: that they were such as destroy only those who practise them.

And the true France, devoted to the establishment of a régime of world-peace, held out hospitable hands to every ideal of gracious import in science, religion and literature, wherever it arose. The essential sin of Prussia, on the contrary, was, that, worshipping only force, she planned the subjugation of all Europe. The goal of domination at which she aimed could be reached only through an ocean of blood. She willed war, she willed murder, and to prepare her way she sought to impose on the world a picture in which she appeared as a Knight of the Holy Ghost "in shining armour," and all the other non-Germanic nations as robber-empires, degenerates, incompetents.

These words of introduction were necessary in view of the systematic libelling of France which goes on in certain obscure papers, and which proceeds, as all the world knows, chiefly from German organisations in the United States. But the purpose of this article is not controversial, but positive. It is concerned merely to give a random glimpse of the heroism with which at this moment in the trenches, the camps, and the hospitals the priests of France are serving the tricolour of the transfigured Republic.

A literature on the subject is already in existence. The book of the Abbé Klein, well known for his luminous study of the United States, has been translated into English: for that reason, and also because it is less rich in detail, I do not draw

on it. The pictures of war which follow are derived mainly from a collection of soldiers' letters, edited by Ernest Daudet, from *Les Soutanes sous la Mitraille,* by the Abbé René Gaell, *prêtre-infirmier,* and from *Le Clergé, les Catholiques, et la Guerre,* by Gabriel Langlois, with a preface by Mgr. Herscher, Archbishop of Laodicea.

Priests and ecclesiastical students are serving in the armies of the Republic in many capacities. Some are chaplains, regularly attached to the army ambulances and hospitals: the old virus of anti-clericalism was still active enough to delay their nomination till the eleventh hour. Others are doing the same work, but as volunteers under a scheme inaugurated by the late Comte de Mun. Still others are employed as stretcher-bearers or hospital attendants. The balance, the great majority, are fighting side by side with their fellow-citizens as plain soldiers of the Army of Liberation. This inclusion of priests in the ranks is peculiar to France. It dates from the adoption of the Two Years' Law, when, on the shortening of the term of military service, all exemptions were suppressed. It is hardly to be denied that the measure was inspired less by logic than by malice. But in actual working out it has recoiled singularly on those who saw in it a lever for the disintegration of the Church. The soldier-priests have been the little leaven that has leavened the whole mass.

It is impossible to estimate the total number engaged under all these heads. We do know that there are not less than twenty thousand occupied in the care of the wounded, and that sixty thousand is a conservative total estimate. They are sown through every corps of the Grand Army, and their influence would seem to be as great with the *gamin* and the *gouailleur* of Paris as with the simplest peasant of Brittany or Alsace.

The first picture that seizes the imagination is the return of the soldier-priests from all the ends of the earth to give their answer to the crime of Prussia. From foreign universities, from Constantinople, Jerusalem, Madagascar, the Americas, from Ireland itself they came, trooping at the sound of the bugle of defence. It is, of course, foolish to suppose that all, or most of them, had been driven into enforced exile: most of them were voluntarily engaged in teaching or missionary work, but some were, in the truest and saddest sense, exiles. What matter! Their mother France had sinned, but her sins were as snow against the scarlet brutality of Prussia. M. Bompard, the French Ambassador at Constantinople, gives in his official report a vivid picture of the priests of every Order eagerly imploring facilities — almost quarrelling in their ardour — to return to France and the flag without a moment's delay.

"If I live for a hundred years," writes the Archbishop of Laodicea, "I shall never forget the

spectacle I witnessed at the station of Fribourg (Switzerland) during the days of mobilisation. . . . I saw a great crowd of compatriots who, with shouts of 'France for ever!' 'Switzerland for ever!' were streaming into the last train. Among them I noticed many young men wearing soutanes or other ecclesiastical costume. When I learned that they were expelled religious I could not forbear expressing to them my gratitude and enthusiasm. I shall never forget the generous eagerness with which they were flying to the help of France. They declared themselves ready to do their duty, their whole duty. A sympathetic crowd surrounded them, cheering heartily. I shall always have before my eyes that picture of waving handkerchiefs, of young manly faces, radiant with faith and hope. The mobilisation appeared to me in all its beauty 'symbolised by a sword surmounted by a cross.'"

So they returned, and, once in the field, their record is almost monotonous in its heroism. Mgr. Herscher truly describes the collection of incidents and letters assembled by M. Langlois as a "breviary of patriotism." You find in it a cloud of witnesses testifying to the fashion in which, with the first roar of the guns, religion came back to honour.

"There are neither pagans nor sceptics here," writes one young soldier. "Everybody is glad, if he has five minutes, to spend them before the altar. Before the war many were ashamed to be seen

kneeling or making the sign of the Cross; you find no one like that now."

"The cannon," says another, "is a good converter." "Nothing gives you the feeling of absolute dependence on God so well as twenty-four hours in the trenches." "If my friends saw me now," runs the confession of a Parisian, "they would certainly not recognize me, me the mocker who believed in nothing. I am transformed." The chief anxiety of those who have strayed, and come back, is to let their people at home know that they died in the faith of Christ. "Tell my wife, father, to teach the little one her prayers. That is the best of all!" runs a typical last message.

"I do not fear death," writes a fatally wounded boy of twenty-two. "I have seen it and see it too close this moment: there is nothing horrid about it, for it leads to happiness."

The Abbé Morette, who served in 1870, is, in this war, an army chaplain. He gives graphic and touching pictures of the re-awakening.

"When we are fortunate enough to be able to set up our field chapel, or to celebrate Mass and Benediction in some church half-destroyed by the enemy, it is a curious spectacle to see the officers mingled indifferently with their men 'waiting their turn.' No favour is shown to the commissioned ranks—one chaplain hears the confession, the other gives Holy Communion. Sometimes when danger is reported too near one gives Communion that

evening . . . by way of *viaticum*. Sometimes when the order to advance comes unexpectedly we have to give absolution *en bloc* to a whole company . . . on condition of subsequent confession later when the recipient returns . . . if he does return!"

It is the same with the enemy's wounded. The Abbé, not without a gleam of humour, shows himself acting as interpreter between a French Lutheran minister, who did not know German, and German wounded of his denomination. "The most scrupulous theologian might perhaps find in my exhortations certain grammatical faults, but not, I think, any capital error of dogma."

Assuredly it is long years since, in the fair plains of France, Mass was celebrated in such settings of beauty and terror. This is how a Montmartrois attended it in a village church—

"I was returning with the rest of a fatigue party from digging potatoes for the company. . . . With the clay still on my hands I managed to work my way into a place beside my lieutenant, a commandant, a sergeant, and some comrades. The elevation had been reached. . . . And then in the choir the fresh, clear voices of young girls intoned the canticle: 'Mary, Queen of France, protect us!' My nerves could not bear the tension, and then . . . well, I hid my face in my képi.

"They sang very prettily, the little country maidens, and the three canticles to Joan of Arc

(which I did not know!) were 'the right thing in the right place.' . . . I offered a prayer of thanks to the good God for having protected me against all dangers.

"The poor old priest . . . Mass finished, turned round in front of the altar and said to us in a strangled voice: 'And now, valiant soldiers, . . . go to victory!' "

Or they pray in the open.

"Imagine a very beautiful valley, planted with great trees all yellowing with autumn, horses tied to every trunk, huts of every kind, shape, and style, soldiers of all arms: the whole forming a picture of incomparable dignity.

"The altar was set up against two giant oaks. There were more than a thousand soldiers present, including the Staff, generals, colonels and commandants."

And this is how Cardinal Lucon celebrated his Christmas Mass in a cellar in bombarded Rheims—

"I shall never forget that Christmas night. The altar was supported on champagne-cases, and each person assisting had a champagne-case for a seat. There were present refugees who have nowhere else to sleep, citizens taking refuge from the shells, and at least 800 soldiers and officers of all grades. The hymns were sung by a group of fifty soldiers. They sang all our popular hymns. . . . It was very

impressive; we seemed to have returned to the Catacombs."

The Abbé Félicien Laroutzet, second-lieutenant in the 144th of the Line, paints us still another Mass with a brush steeped in even stranger colours. He had been permitted to say Mass for the first time for a month—

"Hardly had I finished the Elevation than a German shell hit the tower just above the choir, and plunged the church in darkness. Then a second. It was to be feared that a third would enter by the windows and shatter the altar to fragments. During the Communion the third shell arrived. Almost complete darkness ensued, but the altar, the curé, and myself went untouched. I finished Communion as quickly as possible, and we escaped."

This famous encounter, he adds, secured his promotion to the grade of second-lieutenant.

And so on, and so on. All behind the front; with shells, friendly and hostile, whistling in a perpetual criss-cross overhead, on improvised altars; with every idle vanity shrivelled under the scrutiny of death, the soldiers of France assist humbly at the supreme sacrifice. As the celebrant raises for adoration the Host, transubstantiated from bread to the Body of Christ, the buglers lift their instruments, and a fanfare of spiritual triumph cleaves through the thunder of the guns. The *Ave Maria* and the *Stabat Mater,* chanted

in stout soldier voices, are followed by the *Marseillaise.* Thus does France, returned to her origins, repel the invader of her peaceful land, the ravager of homes, the profaner of churches.

When we come to the priest-combatants, the *curés sac-au-dos,* the record is one of stainless and noble heroism. As Mgr. Herscher says, it would be necessary to invent a new language in order to characterise justly what have become deeds of every day. It is not in "clerical" newspapers that the courage of the soldier-priest is enshrined, but in the columns of the *Journal Officiel.* The Legion of Honour and the Military Medal have been awarded in numerous instances, and citations in the Orders of the Day have been still more frequent.

Thus Corporal de Gironde, of the 81st of the Line, receives the Military Medal for extraordinarily daring patrol work. He is a Jesuit. The Dominican Corporal Jaméguy rallies, within fifty yards of the German trenches, a party of five unwounded and eight wounded men who had been cut off, and leads them all into safety the next day under a vicious fire. The Abbé Boravalle writes—

"After a very hot day our commandant announced that he was making recommendations in our company for promotion to the rank of corporal. Of four recommended, three were priests: I am proud to be one of them."

Incidents of devoted heroism, in which there is a swift counterchange between the rôle of soldier and that of priest, are almost innumerable: certainly no selection can convey a just notion of their abundance. Let me quote the words of a writer in the *Journal de Genève,* the chief organ of Swiss Protestantism—

"Observe that there is not a list of those who have fallen on the field of honour or who are cited in the Order of the Day of the Army in which you will not find priests. Such a one carried the flag into action; another, recommended for the Legion of Honour, was killed that very day; a third, seeing his company waver—he was a lieutenant—leaped to their head shouting, 'I am a priest. I do not fear death! Forward! He recovered the position, but fell riddled with bullets.

"Or we read such stories as this: After the battle, amongst the wounded and agonising, a soldier not so badly wounded as the rest dragged himself to an erect position and cried out to the dying: 'I am a priest. Receive absolution!' And he blessed them with his mutilated hand."

Take again the testimony of M. Frédéric Masson, a great writer, but no Catholic—

"What Frenchmen were the first to march? Who gave the example, who went to death instantly and without a murmur, who merited the epaulettes and the crosses? The priests.

"There they are with their knapsacks on their

backs, and soon the knapsacks will be off by order of our generals. In this supreme peril we need officers. And many, for many are being killed. You will see the priests in command of sections, companies—who knows if you will not see them in command of regiments if there are any priests left! There they are all the braver because it is their duty to be tender: *beati milites,* and if they are a little short in military instruction, which is easily acquired, one recalls the saying of Bonaparte to Subry—they have what is not to be acquired: contempt for death, for they are priests and they believe."

The superior education of the *prêtre-soldat,* as compared with the majority of his comrades, gives to his narrative letters a special value. A seminarist describes a night surprise on a German sentry post—

"I crawl through the mud, stopping for five minutes every three or four yards . . . reach the edge of the canal and drop quietly in. . . . I advance very slowly, the sentry is not more than ten paces away. But suddenly my teeth begin to chatter, and I am unable, for all my efforts, to keep my jaws quiet. Fear? No, cold! . . . I am obliged to take my handkerchief and tie it round my head as if I had the toothache. . . ."

He surprises the sentry, chokes him into insensibility, trusses him up, and crawls back to his men. The reconnaissance completed they return to their

lair in a little wood. They are troubled about the fate of the sentry.

"My sergeant, my two soldiers, and myself recite a decade of the Rosary for him. One of the soldiers refused at first to pray for a Boche. It was necessary to explain a whole heap of theological matters to him on charity in time of war. He at last consented on condition that we should say two other decades for our own dear soldiers. . . . I do not dare to say that I find pleasure in the work I have to do. But when I think of our poor France, and of the crimes of these barbarians: if you knew what they have done!"

So runs the record. Everywhere you find the priest first in danger, and in abnegation, confessing his comrades in the trenches, then heading their bayonet-charge; after the battle, his rifle laid aside, he is whispering consolation into the ear of some poor broken enemy, Pole or German, launched against civilisation by the bloodthirsty megalomania of a Prussian Emperor.

I cannot close this paper of random instances without transcribing in full the story of Sister Julie of Gerbeviller. This is how her name stands in the *Journal Officiel*—

"By order of the Minister of War to be Chevalier of the Legion of Honour: Mme. Amélie Rigard, in religion Sister Julie, nurse at the field hospital of Gerbeviller."

Appointed by her Superior to this hospital, she

remained at her post during an incessant bombardment in charge of a thousand wounded. She fed and cared for them, and saved them, by the calm authority of her manner, from being put to death during the German occupation. Can one read without a thrill of pride and admiration this glorious salute paid by soldiers of France to the heroic nun?

On the recapture of Gerbeviller a squadron of *chasseurs* halts before the hospital. . . .The captain asks to see Sister Julie.

"Sister, will you do us a favour? Permit me to parade my soldiers before you."

Prevailing with difficulty over her modesty, the captain has his way. Turning to his squadron, he orders the "Portez lance!"

"Comrades, you remember when we checked the Germans here on August 25th. We saw in this direction huge flames rising up into the heavens. You see what these flames meant. . . .

"Well in the middle of this evacuated village, under the shells and bullets, even after the retreat of our heroic infantry who—one against ten—had held the bridge so long, a woman remained here at the post of charity attending to the wounded, lavishing her care on all. It was Sister Julie.

"The President of the Republic has hung on her breast the Cross of the brave. Salute it!"

So, with swords and lances at the salute, the squadron swept on to battle.

It is a noble and touching episode, worthy of France, and there were many such as Sister Julie in the dark days of retreat. Innumerable, patient, fearless women tended the poilu back to health, won the whole nation to the height of resolution and confidence from which it now so confidently confronts the future.

These books are a rich, even an inexhaustible repository of Catholic heroism. It will be a pity, and a grave loss to the literature of the war, if they are not made available for English readers. France has long enough been judged for her sins; it is time that there was some celebration of her virtues. She has been long enough condemned on a bill of indictment drafted by her enemies, and would-be conquerors: it is time that we listened to her speaking for herself. Nor in praising France do I, or do my fellow-writers, think it necessary to blacken German Catholicism. Simple, misled, unfree units of the Central Powers are dying all over Europe at the bidding of two disastrous Emperors: these plain soldiers, obeying the call of patriotism and deprived of any true vision of things, are dying in good faith, in our good Faith, and dying well. But over all the leaders of German Catholicism lies the red cloud of blood with which the statecraft of their country has enveloped the world. When they burned Louvain, the barbarians lit a fire which is not easily to be put out.

THE GOSPEL OF THE DEVIL

I.—BISMARCK

WHAT is the Devil's Gospel? I take it that the three main articles are violence, intellect, and a certain malign splendour of domination. If that is the formula of the Courts of Hell, it is certainly the formula of Prussianism.

There is here no question of mere instinctive egotism. We are in presence of an Evangel of Conquest, fully worked out, and completely conscious of itself. Later in this series we shall have an opportunity of examining the wild work of some of the Berlin theorists of blackguardism. But before there was a theory, there was a fact. In the world of action Prussia had thrown up two huge mountain-peaks of achievement: Frederick the Great, so grossly flattered by Carlyle, and Bismarck. Between them yawns that Valley of Purification to which Jena marks the entrance. For that interregnum of humility Prussia is truly great: your heart beats with Körner, with Fichte, even with the cloudy Hegel. But two generations later the type is once more master: Frederick, reincarnated, calls himself Otto Eduarde Leopold Bismarck Schönhausen. He is the modern Wotan to whom Germany has built her altars.

In that curious non-moral mode of writing history for which that German "moralist," Garlyle, was chiefly responsible Bismarck was a "great man." He changed the map of Europe. He stole Schleswig-Holstein from Denmark; euchred Austria out of her share of the spoils; and taking, as his raw materials, the old free German States, the blood of France, and the imbecile bluff of Napoleon, he produced Modern Germany. Let us observe the light of idealism in which he worked. It is not literature, or imagination, or mere phrase-spinning to say that Bismarck made cruelty his sacrament. I am anxious to make this study as objective and free from prejudice as possible. It is Bismarck who speaks for himself in 1849—

"It is desirable and necessary to improve the social and political condition of Germany; this, however, cannot be brought about by resolutions, and votes of majorities or speeches of individuals, but by *blood and iron.*"

If this was Bismarck's own guiding star, there were others who recognised it as clearly as himself. When the list of a suggested new Cabinet was presented to Frederick William IV in just that year, 1849, he drew a thick line through Bismarck's name and wrote opposite it in the margin—

"Red-hot reactionary. Likes the smell of blood. May be employed later on."

When employed later on—in France—he did

not belie the nostril diagnosis. I quote from Hoche's *Bismarck Intime*—

"Apropos of the burnt villages and the peasants who were burnt, Bismarck remarked that the smell from the villages was 'like the smell of roast onions.' Favre remarked to Bismarck that ladies were to be seen strolling on the boulevards, and pretty, healthy children were playing around. 'You surprise me,' said Bismarck; 'I thought you had already eaten all the children.'

"Favre complained to Bismarck that his soldiers had fired on a hospital, *L'Hospice des Quinze-Vingts:* 'Why not?' he replied. 'The French fired on our soldiers who were vigorous and strong.' "

The Prussia, to whose tradition he succeeded, lives in the irony or indignant protest of the great humanists. I cite but two. "War," said Mirabeau, "is the national industry of Prussia." And Mr. Frederic Harrison, in a superb essay, published when Germany was hammering at the gates of Paris in 1870-71, drew out a sound digest of title—

"Prussia is the sole European kingdom which has been built up province by province on the battlefield, cemented stone by stone in blood. Its kings have been soldiers; sometimes generals, sometimes drill-sergeants, but ever soldiers; its people are a drilled nation of soldiers on furlough; its sovereign is simply commander-in-chief; its

aristocracy are officers of the staff; its capital is a camp."

He went on to characterise in words that bite deeper since Liége, Louvain, and Antwerp—

"Unhappily the gospel of the sword has sunk deeper into the entire Prussian people than any other in Europe. The social system being that of an army, and each citizen drilled man by man, there is no sign of national conscience in the matter. And this servile temper, begotten by this eternal drill, inclines a whole nation to repeat as if by word of command, and perhaps to believe, the convenient sophisms which the chief of its staff puts into their mouths."

His central belief was that power consists in bullying. Had he thought things over he might, perhaps, have noticed that it costs more strength to lift a man up than to knock him down. He chose the other way. His spiritual successors tell you that the meaning of the black, red, and white of the German tricolour is: "Through night and blood to the light." Germany had legitimate ambitions. There are ways of influencing the world that do not involve war: it was not powder, or bayonets, or even howitzers that laid Europe in intellectual bondage to Kant. Bismarck chose the formula of "Blood and Iron." What it cost he himself will tell us, speaking out of the shadows and desolation of old age. The quotation is from Busch, his less discreet Boswell—

" 'There is no doubt, however,' said Bismarck, 'that I have caused unhappiness to great numbers. But for me three great wars would not have taken place. Eighty thousand men would not have been killed, and would not now be mourned by parents, brothers, sisters, and widows.' 'And sweethearts,' I added somewhat prosaically and inconsiderately. 'And sweethearts,' he repeated. 'I have settled that with God, however. But I have had little, if any, pleasure from all that I have done, while on the contrary, I have had a great deal of worry, anxiety, and trouble.' "

He sought power, and, in seeking it, he had little regard for scraps of paper. Frederick the Great had taught him that, if a ruler is sometimes bound to sacrifice his life, he is often bound to sacrifice his honour to the greatness of the State. Maturely, coldly, with ashes fallen over all the flames of passion, he tells us in his *Reflections and Reminiscences* how he forced on the Franco-German War. There are versions of the story more vivid and so far more vile. The Ems telegram has arrived. Bismarck is dining with von Moltke and Roon, and all three fail to find anything resembling war in it. But the Prince has a "conviction"—

"Under this conviction I made use of the royal authorisation communicated to me through Abeken, to publish the contents of the telegram; and in the presence of my two guests I reduced the

telegram by striking out words, but without adding or altering. . . .

"The difference in the effect of the abbreviated text of the Ems telegram as compared with that produced by the original was not the result of stronger words but of the form which made this announcement seem decisive, *while Abeken's version would only have been regarded as a fragment of a negotiation still pending, and to be continued at Berlin.*

"After I had read out the concentrated edition to my two guests, Moltke remarked: 'Now it has a different ring; it sounded before like a parley; now it is like a flourish in answer to a challenge.' "

Bismarck then explained what he would do with his "concentrated edition."

"This explanation brought in the two generals a revulsion to a more joyous mood, the liveliness of which surprised me. They had suddenly recovered their pleasure in eating and drinking, and spoke in a more cheerful vein. Roon said: 'Our God of old lives still, and will not let us perish in disgrace.' Moltke so far relinquished his passive equanimity that, glancing up joyously towards the ceiling, and abandoning his usual punctiliousness of speech, he smote his hand upon his breast and said: 'If I may but live to lead our armies in such a war, then the devil may come directly afterwards and fetch away the "old carcase." ' "

If the God of Roon, the God of falsified tele-

grams, was the same God with whom Bismarck "settled matters" regarding his eighty thousand slain, that strange compact of reconciliation is readily intelligible. Otherwise, no!

If Bismarck made cruelty his sacrament, in the gross, he was far from neglecting details. No torch lit a village in France, no finger pulled a trigger against non-combatants, that was not sped by his counsel. I first read his words in Belgium as the stories of Liége, and Visé, and Aerschot, and Louvain poured in—

"True strategy consists in hitting your enemy and hitting him hard. Above all, you must inflict on the inhabitants of invaded towns the maximum of suffering, so that they may become sick of the struggle, and may bring pressure to bear on their government to discontinue it. You must leave the people through whom you march only their eyes to weep with.

"In every case the principle which guided our general was that war must be made terrible to the civil population so that it may sue for peace."

And when Favre, coming out from the heroic defence of Paris, appealed to him in name of that "brotherhood which binds the brave of all the earth," the Wotan of modern Germany replied—

" 'You speak of your resistance! You are proud of your resistance. Well, let me tell you, if M. Trochu were a German general, I would shoot him this evening. You have not the right—do you

understand?—in the face of God, in the face of humanity, for mere military vainglory, to expose to the horrors of famine a city of two millions. . . . Do not speak of your resistance, it is criminal!' "

Abeken, who was called "Bismarck's Pen," wrote of his chief—

"Goethe's saying, 'Faithful to one aim, even on a crooked road,' suits him well."

Such was the founder of the German Empire. and such the methods by which he founded it.

THE GOSPEL OF THE DEVIL

II.—NIETZSCHE

IT is in no way surprising to find defenders of the calamitous prophet of Hohenzollernism active to prove that he meant this fine thing, and that, and did not mean blood and domination. The truth is that only too many English writers allowed themselves to be tarred with the Nietzschean brush. They made him a cult, a boom, a pinnacle of superior vision. Now that the Moloch, whose high priests were beyond all others Nietzsche and Houston Stewart Chamberlain, is exacting his awful tribute, the worshippers, once so self-confident, begin to fear a little for their own reputations. For the issue of this war is to kill Prussianism, not only in Germany, but in the whole life and philosophy of Europe. The universal watchword is: "Never again!"

The vogue of the Supermaniacs is, perhaps, best explained by the curious lack of seriousness in dealing with ideas which is characteristic of the English mind in its worst periods. Great journals flatter the Harnacks and the Euckens and the rest in their attempt to deny all authenticity to the "scraps of paper" on which Christian belief is

founded, and wonder, in the next column, why people are not going to church. Professor Cramb —who, by the way, is painfully German in his "anti-German" book—touches upon this inexplicable unreality of English thought. He suggests that it has counted for much in producing in Germany that professorial contempt which one finds, especially, in a writer like Treitschke. When your Prussian says: "Fill me a bath of blood!" he means blood. When your English critic reads it, he says, too often: "What a vivid image!"

Of the "deep damnation" which lies at the heart of the Nietzschean philosophy no doubt is admissible. It is idle to say that he contradicted himself at twenty turns, and that especially he hated the professors and raked them with the shrapnel of his irony. It is the way of supermen to hate other supermen. It is the badge of the tribe. Of all his writings Germany took and absorbed just as much as fitted in with her mood of domination and Empire. Hauptmann—another of the flattered renegades—told us the other day that if you open the knapsack of a German soldier you will probably find in it a copy of *Thus Spake Zarathustra.* Nietzsche was angry with the professors only because they preferred obscure, and he preferred lucid brutality. Not since Lucifer was so much light used to dark ends. Not since Diana was great in Ephesus were such beautiful images cast or carven in the service of a false worship. He made

German dance, as before him, only Heine had done.

"I have the idea," he wrote, "that with *Zarathustra* I have brought the German language to its point of perfection."

The boast is probably true. The devil was always a good stylist, and it is not inappropriate that when his gospel is at its worst, his prose should be at its best. We may charitably assume that those whom he led off the plain paths of life into his foul and blood-bathed jungles, were taken captive, not by his message, but by his music.

What then was his creed, or rather his vision? For he was the mystagogue of Prussianism, who chanted but never explained. As in the case of Bismarck, I propose to exclude as far as possible anything written *ad hoc,* or since the war. My first witness is Alfred Fouillée, the doyen of French philosophy, whose *Nietzsche et l'Immoralisme* appeared in 1902 (the unfamiliarity of Fouillée's name is a biting satire on our leaders of thought)—

"If the Vandals had read a course in Hegelian metaphysics, they would have held the same language as Nietzsche."

The popular instinct which named the Prussians the Huns was thus long anticipated by the greatest Platonist in Europe.

To Nietzsche the whole motive behind life is a sort of metaphysical symbol which he calls the

Will-to-Power. The whole task of life is to impose your power on others *an andern Macht auslassen.* With what aim? To evolve the Superman. But in this struggle of all against all we must, in a world divided into nations and classes, struggle for the victory of some nation and some fashion of government. For Prussia, and for an aristocracy more scientifically cruel than the world has ever known. And what is the first step towards this Elysium? War, and again war. War, with the formula of the Assassins for its formula—

"Nothing is true, everything is permitted."

It is idle to remind us that Nietzsche touched life at other points, and that in his flaming incoherence you will find contradictions of this vision. For it was this vision of Attila, and no other, that conquered the imagination of Prussia. She desired all Europe for an Empire, and after that the seas, and at last the world. It needed but one further step in this mysticism of the madhouse to decree divine honours to the Kaiser.

Now let Nietzsche speak for himself. Thus spake Zarathustra on the morality of war—

"You shall love peace as a means to new wars, and a short peace better than a long. . . .

"I do not counsel you labour, I do not counsel you peace, but victory. Let your labour be a conflict, and your peace a victory. . . .

"It was said of old that a good cause sanctifies war; but I say to you that a good war sanctifies any cause."

As to what he meant by a "good" war he leaves us in no doubt. He meant simply a war in which a victorious Prussia would slay and burn without measure and without pity.

"My brothers, I place above you this new Table of the Law: Be hard!"

Zarathustra washes, with shame, his hands, because they have aided someone who was suffering. "Nay, I labour to cleanse my very soul" of the sin of pity, he adds.

"I dream," he cries, "of an association of men who would be whole and complete, who would know no compromise, and who would give themselves the name of destroyers. . . ."

In memorial verses on the death of a friend, killed in France in 1870, he writes—

"Even in the hour of death he ordered men, and he ordered them to destroy."

The three cardinal virtues of the warrior are "pleasure, pride and the instinct of domination."

"If I am convinced"—he means, plainly, "Since I am convinced"—he writes, "that harshness, cruelty, trickery, audacity, and the mood of battle tend to augment the vitality of man, I shall say Yes! to evil, and sin. . . ."

And lest any of his defenders should seek to ex-

plain away this very coherent doctrine as "poetry," let it be remembered that this was a man who had seen war, much of the war of 1870. During its actual progress he wrote deliberately a Satanic pæan from which he never receded—

"On the one hand they (the Democrats) conjure up systems of European equilibrium; on the other hand, they do their best to deprive absolute sovereigns of the right to declare war. . . . They feel it incumbent on them to weaken the monarchical instinct of the masses, and do weaken it by propagating amongst them the liberal and optimistic conception of the world which has its roots in the doctrines of French rationalism and the Revolution; that is, in a philosophy altogether foreign to the German spirit, a Latin platitude, devoid of any metaphysical meaning."

We "must have war, and war again."

"It will not, therefore, be thought that I do ill when I raise here the pæan of war. The resonance of its silver bow is terrible. It comes to us sombre as night; nevertheless, Apollo accompanies, Apollo the rightful leader of states, the god who purifies them. . . . Let us say it then; war is necessary to the State, as the slave is to society."

This transition leads us without a break on to some amiable views regarding the internal organisation of states. To Nietzsche the mass of humanity is a sweating negligibility—

"The misery of those who live by labour must be made yet more rigorous, in order that a very few Olympian men may create a world of art." (Unnecessary to say that the son of the Pastor of Naumburg was to have a life membership of Olympus.) "At their expense, by the artifice of unpaid labour, the privileged classes should be relieved from the struggle for life, and given such new conditions that they can create, and satisfy a new order of needs. . . . And if it is true to say that the Greeks were destroyed by slavery, this other affirmation is most certainly even truer; for lack of slavery, we are perishing."

The reader can but be astonished at the modesty of the slightly impecunious professor from Basel. Why did he not call himself a god? Why a mere superman?

On the subject of God and gods, however, he had views of his own. Just as Fichte used to say to his philosophical students at a certain point in the course: "To-morrow, gentlemen, I will proceed to create God!" so Nietzsche was never tired of repeating: "I have killed God!" His argument is very simple—

"If there did exist gods, how could I bear not to be a god? Consequently, there are no gods."

As to that special mode of worship called Christianity, upon which all justice, love, pity, and help of our neighbours, is in the tradition of Europe,

immovably based, he is unable to speak with even a colour of sanity.

"The Christian concept of God—God as the deity of the sick, God as spider, God as spirit—is one of the most corrupt concepts of God that have ever been attained on earth." Christianity and alcohol are "the two great instruments of corruption."

That he said, "You are going among women. Do not forget your whip!" I do not regard as essential to his philosophy. Most men have said angry things about women at one time or other. But it does happen that the position of women is more abject in Germany than anywhere else in Europe. And it does happen that Nietzsche also said—

"For man, happiness lies in the formula, I desire. For woman, in the formula, he desires."

And also "man is to be reared for war, woman for the recreation of the warrior. All the rest is folly."

Did Hauptmann's Germans, one wonders, whip out their new knapsack Bibles and run over this text before they entered Aerschot and Louvain?

In his practical ethics he works out the theory of the Ems telegram and the Berlin Press Bureau—

"In point of fact it matters greatly to what end one lies, whether one preserves or destroys by means of falsehood."

It would be a simple weariness to multiply passages in greater abundance. They are all of the same texture, for, despite incoherence and contradictions, they all come from the same centre of corruption, the Will-to-Power. It is a long-drawn-out Metaphysics of Bullying, nothing less and nothing more.

One has only to think of the soil into which seed like this was dropped in order to understand the harvest of desolation that the swords are now reaping. Think of Prussia, flattered by all the world —even by Matthew Arnold—into regarding herself as the chosen of the Lord. Think of the unearned prosperity brought by the French tribute, of the raw egotism, the coarse insolence bred by it. Think of how the old Germanic racial chauvinism was nourished by the theories of Gobineau as freshened by the appalling Chamberlain. Think of how French intellect has been boycotted in England and America for thirty years, while troops of translators, critics and publishers ran round canvassing first-class reputations for fourth-rate German scholars. Think of the tawdry pretensions of Berlin, of the infinite vulgárity of the Alley and Column of Victory.

Is it to be wondered at that a creed like Nietzsche's, let loose in such a world, has succeeded? Reading it, Krupp feels himself a veritable knight of the Holy Ghost. Kaiser Wil-

helm's brow grows heavy with the growing cares of the superman. Buccaneer Bernhardi cries out: "My lust for blood is philosophised." The diplomats join in in chorus: "Remember Bismarck! Since France and England both want peace, let us either lie or bully them into war!"

Nietzsche said of himself: "I am a fatality!" He was. Three years before this war was thought of, in attempting to define Nietzscheanism in an introduction to Halévy's *Life,* I wrote as opening words: "The duel between Nietzsche and Civilisation is over. . . ."

I was wrong; it is not over. But between Prussianism and Civilisation it is that this epical war is joined; there is not room on earth for the two.

THE GOSPEL OF THE DEVIL

III.—TREITSCHKE AND THE PROFESSORS

I CONFESS that I am weary of these German Professors. Having deposed God—by stern decree of their theological Press Bureau—they felt that a gap had been created, and volunteered to fill it. But as a substitute divinity the Herr Professor falls a little short of perfect accomplishment. I have sat under or come in contact with a few truly great men among them, like Windleband of Heidelberg, and Pastor of Innsbruck. But the Haeckels, the Harnacks, the Euckens, and the rest mistook their trade when they went in for omniscience. These drill-sergeants of metaphysics understand everything except reality. The "fog of war," of which one had heard so much, was as nothing to the fog of peace into which they had plunged Germany and Europe.

You must remember the nature of the system of which they are the mature, show products. In a German university it is unusual for a student to take a degree. Our own institutions are appalling enough, in all conscience; but there is, at least, a sort of scheduled, educational mediocrity to which even athletic demigods must attain. And there is

not the least doubt that, in the intervals of neglecting their work, our college men do, in the mass, enter by subtle ways into the mysterious and honourable art of being gentlemen. In a German university you do not find any uniform, general life on which everybody can draw. The caste system—on which all Prussia is founded—manifests itself very soon. Either you clip off your friends' ears in duels, keep dogs, abjure learning, and absorb beer for two or three years, or else you set out to be a Herr Doktor. By steadily accumulating notes, and grimly avoiding fresh air, you arrive at the moment when you can order a visiting card with this wizard-title on it. Then, wearing a nimbus of adulation, you pass on to be a *Privat Dozent,* and ultimately a Herr Professor. Everybody's hat is off to you; you meet with no real criticism or free thrust of thought.

Add to this the fact that German is a singularly difficult language in which to tell the truth plainly, even if you should desire to do so. Two or three writers, like Schiller, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche, have contrived the miracle; but the general impression inflicted on the Latin mind by German literature is that of inadequately cooked plum-duff. One understands a great Socialist like Otto Effertz turning in his third book from German to French with the observation: "Formerly I wrote in a provincial dialect. I now experiment in a European language." A brilliant lady of my

acquaintance, who suffered fools more or less gladly at Marburg and Bonn, is of opinion that the Prussian reaches his most exquisite moment of lyricism when, at Christmas or Easter, he ties a bow of blue ribbon on a sausage, and presents it to his beloved. This is a disputable view; but it does indicate certain inadequacies in the German apparatus of expression which really exist.

Imagine, then, your Herr Professor, thus fed on gross flattery, inducted into the most rigid caste system in Europe, mentally imprisoned in a language in which it is easier to say Yes! and No! together to any question than to say either separately: turn him loose on German history, give him a Kaiser and a Court audience who demand adulation, give him, further, a set of prosperous bandits like Frederick the Great and fruitful liars like Bismarck to work on, and you get Treitschke. I have looked more or less carefully through eight large volumes of his history and essays. In one sentence you find jingoism, in the next egotism. For my part, I have been unable to find much else. I gather from Dr. Max Lenz and other biographers that this renegade Saxon was at one time or other blind, deaf, and honest. Whether he was all three simultaneously, or in what permutations he worked, I do not know, and one is very far from gibing at human suffering. But when an invalid sets up as a Prophet of Bullydom, when a feeble creature, saved from collapse only by hu-

man affection, goes about to blaspheme all the intimate sanctities of civilisation, one feels justified in summoning him to the bar of his own Darwinism. Among modern nations Prussia has had the strange experience of having a Gospel of Relentless Force preached to her by invalids and degenerates. Her metaphysic has been dictated from a hospital ward.

The one thing you find in Treitschke, reverberating through page after page, is the doctrine of a Chosen People. He used his learning, which was not inconsiderable, his prestige, and his influence to keep hammering into Prussia the belief that she was the chosen race, the seed of the superman, the predestined ruler of Western civilisation. He preached the ruthless supremacy of the State, and the sacrifice to military power of all humane activities. He regarded Holland, Belgium, Denmark, Luxemburg as fragments of Germany that had been temporarily broken off, and must be recovered. He taught those whom he influenced to dream of a Vandal Empire, straddled across all Europe from Dunkirk to Belgrade. Domination, domination, and again domination: that is the message of Treitschke. Were he alive he would have rejoiced blatantly at the tearing up of the "scrap of paper" which stood for nothing except the conscience of Europe and the integrity of Belgium.

I understand that we are to have solemn and careful studies of his works issued in English. A

great deal of his detailed historical research is probably of high value. But it would be just as well if critics realised that, for the future, when a German corrupter like Treitschke is translated, he comes not to judge, but to be judged. He preached the Gospel of the Devil, the gospel of domination, cruelty, and planned barbarism. Whatever intellectual prestige he came to acquire will no more save him than brilliancy will save Lucifer.

TRADE OR HONOUR?

A DEMOCRACY, which, for its own defence, has deprived itself of free speech is a dangerous paradox. The position is not merely abnormal; it is so abnormal that the path of return to normality is to the average citizen unimaginable. Since war is the supplanting of reason by violence it is natural that it should swallow up Liberalism which is precisely the opposite. All values are turned inside out. Killing becomes a solemn duty. Lying is holy on condition that it deceives the enemy to his death. Men must approve their manhood by handing themselves over soul and body to others, their military superiors. Criticism, and the individual mind, accept engulfment in a world of patterned conduct, salutes, absolutism. All that corruption of the essence of life comes with war as its inseparable shadow, and the rankness of the Prussian offence is not merely to have foregone honour, and broken treaties and sown untimely death throughout the world, but also to have compelled civilisation to debase itself in order to preserve itself. So, at least, must it strike a Liberal.

We have bowed to the whole process of retrogression imposed on us. With bitterness of spirit we have seen unnecessary arbitrariness added to

what was necessary, added by methods as contemptible as were ever used in furtherance of the old political and economic tyrannies before the war. Now we have the right to call a halt. The rich, reckless clamourers who in these days are almost the monopolists of free speech have already achieved some deterioration of the ideal for which the people of the Allied countries took up the challenge of war. We may assume that the Allied Governments are better custodians of the democratic faith, but there is always danger, in times of stress, from those whom one may call the terrorists of "patriotism." Protest has become an obligation. Nobody who has watched latest developments can fail to be alarmed by their manifest tendency. That tendency may be summarised in one ignoble sentence. An attempt is being made to transform what began as a war for honour into a war for trade. Powerful intriguers of unbounded assurance are sedulous behind the backs of the fighting men, scheming to run up new flags in the place of the old. The inscription "Justice" is to be hauled down, and "Markets" is to be hoisted in its stead. In pursuance of that new object the powerful innovators are ready to extend far beyond their natural term the torture and agony which are now the sole realities of Europe. They are willing, for the accomplishment of it, to ordain that the blood of better men shall drip indefinitely into the cistern of Gehenna. And since

it is the bellowers and gamblers at home and not the silent trench-fellows of death at the front that exercise most influence on national policy, it is to be feared that the former may prevail. Assuredly protest is a matter of obligation.

This is no argument, or faint-hearted appeal, for a premature or inconclusive peace. Truly the scourge of war is more terrible, more Apocalyptic in its horror, than even the most active imagination could have pictured. When the time comes to write down in every country a plain record of it, with its wounds and weariness, and flesh-stabbing, and bone-pulverising, and lunacies, and rats and lice and maggots, and all the crawling festerment of battle-fields, two landmarks in human progress will be reached. The world will for the first time understand the nobility, beyond all phrase, of soldiers, and it will understand also the foulness, beyond all phrase, of those who compel them into war. In these days God help the militarists! There will be no need to organise a peace movement; it will organise itself in all democratic countries, spontaneous and irresistible as a prime force of nature. It will still be necessary to arm against those who linger in the blood-mists of autocracy, just as civilised men provide against tigers and murderers and syphilis. But God help those who go preaching to mutilated veterans and stricken homes the gospel that war is a normal incident of the intercourse between nations, and an ennobling

thing to be cultivated for its own sake! That by the way. Such is modern war, and knowing it to be such, there is not a man or woman of the Allied peoples, in uniform or out of it, but is ready to go through with it day after day and, if need be, year after year until the anti-human evangel of Berlin is down in the mud. That resolution, so unmistakable, is the supreme answer of democracy to the whole race of blood-and-ironmongers. They loved war, praised war, planned war; we loathed it, believed so little that a modern state would loose it on the world as even to neglect advisable precautions. And now the peace-workers have the war-workers by the throat, and are humbling them in their own picked arena. Despite Nietzsche and Bernhardi and the rest, democracy does not so soften men that they will not die for their ideals. They will do more than die, they will conquer.

So much is liminal; it lies across the threshold of any temple of peace that can be imagined. Until the objects for which the Allies went into the war are achieved it must go on, and we mean it to go on, regardless of any waste of life or substance. But there is another proposition just as basal against the ignoring of which the writer of this article enters his protest. No statesman has the right to change, behind the backs of the fighting men, the aim and purpose of the war. No government has a mandate to substitute markets for jus-

tice. The necessary blood must be spent, it will spend itself freely and without question. But the diplomatist who lavishes one life in excess, in order to achieve objects other than that for which peaceful citizens transformed themselves into soldiers, is a criminal against civilisation. There are many, very many, men in the New Army who believe that no war merely for trade can be justifiable or other than an abomination. If another Power launches war in the name of trade, your resistance is a very different matter: it is the answer of a higher to a lower morality. It must succeed in order precisely to punish those who are willing to make war solely for trade.

Is the fear well founded that powerful men are in fact working behind the stages to bring about such a transformation as has been indicated? Is it merely fancy that discovers the assiduous and not over-clean finger of predatory finance in certain pies that are now on the menu? If so, Liberalism cannot too soon awaken. The New Army attested to die, if need be, for the public law of Europe: there was no mention of tariffs in the bond.

It will be obvious that I am not here speaking of co-operation and co-ordination, economic as well as military, between the Allies for the speeding on of victory. That exists, and has existed in greater or less measure since the beginning; whatever strengthens it is plainly sound and desirable.

What is spoken of is the attempt to encumber purely military issues with a whole new economic programme, and to make the length of the war turn as much on the latter as on the former. It is time for somebody to say quite brutally that this is a struggle to destroy Prussian militarism, not to establish British Protectionism. To this last we may come, but blood and more especially the blood of men enrolled on another appeal, must not be the argument of the innovators. Nor is it suggested that the influence of economic on military resources should be overlooked. The economic factor has indeed proved to be far less decisive, or far less rapidly decisive, than many forecasters of events had anticipated, and for two very valid reasons. For one thing the enemy has at his command the whole centre of Europe, a vast geographical *bloc* interknit in almost all its parts by an uninterrupted system of intercourse which so far remains intact. For another the operation of the economic motive turns on the assumption of a minimum standard of life below which man will not consent to fall, willingly or at all. In normal times of peace this is rigid, and any serious depression of it will produce widespread commotion and revolt. But in war, when the struggle is or is conceived to be for national existence, belligerent peoples will agree to the lopping away of luxury after luxury and conventional necessary after conventional necessary. For a considerable part of

the process they find the society in which they live actually stronger and not weaker. Even when the weakening pinch comes it is countered by a spirit of sacrifice, altogether abnormal and not easily to be measured. So long as the army has a rag to its back, a crust of bread, and a cartridge, economic exhaustion is not complete. The end will probably come sooner, and defeat will be accepted out of calculation before it is accepted out of sheer necessity. What is much more probable is that a military decision will have been obtained at a much earlier stage, but with all this said there remains a perfectly clear distinction between assigning their due rôle to economic conditions on the one hand, and transforming an honour-war into a trade-war on the other hand.

The worst sin of those who desire or seem to desire such a change is that of effecting a deterioration of the moral ideal of the Allies. This is no affair of fine words but of abiding realities. Either this is on our part a war into which we were forced by aggressive militarism—come to overt baseness in the Prussian breach of faith with Belgium and assault on peaceful France, and the Austrian blow of destruction at Serbia—or else it is a mere struggle for domination between greedy Powers. If it were the latter it would be wise to say no more of the antithesis between barbarism and civilisation. It would be wise to finish the nightmare of blood as well as we could, to pouch the spoils, and be

silent. But since it is the former we must resist any debasement of purpose. Since it is a war for the ending of militarism it must include in its ultimate historical sweep the liberation of all peoples who desire liberation, even the Germans. So long as it continues unwarped from its original intention that hope may be fulfilled. Not only is a *locus pœnitentiæ* left for the democracy which must one day arise even in Prussia, but much more is involved. An opportunity is given for that immediate repudiation of a government by a people which in the past has always taken the form of a revolution. Nobody is able to say dogmatically that there is any prospect of such a development within the Central Powers, and nobody is able to say dogmatically that there is not: we are not allowed to know. It is the habit of those countries to surround their frontiers with a wall of brass. We do catch, through the species of man like Liebknecht and Haase, certain rumblings and rumours of discontent, but cannot even guess at their significance. When certain writers profess to find the solidarity in crime of the whole body of the Germanic populations established by the absence of protest against notorious outrages they show little acquaintance with the condition of public opinion in these countries. Prussian militarism and intellectualism begin by lying to and mentally debauching their own citizens. Every German newspaper has represented the Zeppelin raids as successful

attacks on purely military and naval establishments, any other damage being incidental and not designed. Till the end of the war the average ignorant peasant and mechanic will have heard no other story than that the *Lusitania* was a war-ship treacherously disguised. One has only to read the German White Book on Belgium, as translated by Professor Morgan, to understand the sort of scientific denigration of that little people that has been invoked to justify so much of the tale of Louvain and Aerschot and the rest as has been allowed to penetrate to the masses. Penny editions of the Bryce Report do not circulate under either Habsburgs or Hohenzollerns. If fragments of the truth do find a surreptitious way in, the police are there to see that natural indignation shall not express itself. We gather from Liebknecht that the official shepherding of opinion in this regard goes as far as penal servitude and even capital punishment. The actual state of mind of a democratic remnant that may exist is, therefore, to us a clasped and sealed book.

But we do know by the mere inner light of our own principles a great deal that is relevant. The decree of democracy to a whole nation, however bedevilled and misled, can never be one of unconditional destruction. It is not our message to the Germans. So long as their populations identify themselves with the policy of their present miscreant governments they must share their fate.

Defeat and, after defeat, outlawry will be their portion. That outlawry will continue until the historical crime of 1914 is purged by chastisement. But the moment the first internal fissure appears a new order has begun. A Germany that has punished her own crowned and helmeted criminals will come before Europe in a very different guise from one that has naturally adopted them. The breaking away of Austria from Prussia—an unnatural alliance—will fix for us a very wide gulf between Austrian and Prussian. There have been wars in which the greatest internal changes took place without influencing the course of the conflict. The fall of Napoleon III did not bring the struggle of 1870 to an end. But the fall of Wilhelm II would undoubtedly bring this war to an end. If the Teutonic masses desire an early peace, and an early re-entry into the fabric of civilisation, they have but to destroy the false gods they adored. The diplomatist of the old pattern will tell us that these are fantastic suggestions. But the truth is that nothing could seem to our awakened eyes half as fantastic as the old diplomacy, with its suave blindness and sham omniscience. The new diplomacy should help to release imprisoned forces. The inner disruption of the Central Alliance is never very far from practical politics. When the full toll of blood and disillusionment, exacted by Hohenzollernism, comes to be realised, strange births may issue into being. So many men have

died for liberty that we have no right to disbelieve in any of its possibilities. And so long as we adhere, as we must adhere, with a loyalty even meticulous, to the true cause and first spirit of the Allies, no such possibility is ruled out.

But consent to the substitution of "trade" for "honour" as our device, and mark the malign transformation. Some of our less well-inspired publicists have already done something to communicate to the *bloc* of enemy countries a unity which does not inhere in its nature. Things breaking up from within may be held together by pressure from without, and such pressure has been in some measure supplied by those to whom reference is made. By steadily ignoring every impulse of disintegration, racial, economic and moral, they have plastered over although they have not sealed up the structural cracks. The new programme, if adopted, will, however, go far to harden the plaster into cement. The spokesmen of Prussianism will be presented with a complete triumph over any faint voice of civilisation that may still be lifted within the enemy realms. They will say quite legitimately: "Our opponents babbled of honour, and moral ideas. We said that that was all hypocrisy, and that their real aim was to isolate, impoverish, and if possible destroy the whole Germanic race. Who now is right? The shopkeepers' programme has now been openly proclaimed. The struggle of the Germanies is now a struggle for the mere

right to exist. What have you to say now in reply to the Kaiser's resolve to arm every man and boy and woman, aye, and every cat and dog in the Fatherland before submitting to extinction?"

In truth there would be nothing to say. Our ideal would have fallen in the common mud, the last hope of humanity would have perished, and the war must be indefinitely prolonged. If you have driven an enemy into a corner and hold your bayonet pointed at his breast; if he asks on what terms you will accept his surrender and your answer is that in that case he will be not bayoneted but hanged, you must expect resistance *à outrance.* It will become an affair not of courage but of mere sanity. Whatever the divagations of their statesmanship, the Allies will, of course, win. The nations, however stampeded, will not sacrifice the least element of their unity, and the armies, to whatever new deflection their inspiration be submitted, will fight their unwavering way to victory. But it will be a victory tainted with ambiguous and selfish ends. History will write of us that we began nobly, but that our purpose corrupted. The Great War for freedom will not, indeed, have been waged in vain; that is already decided: but it will have but half kept its promises. Blood and iron will have been once more established as the veritable masters of men, and nothing will open before the world save a vista of new wars.

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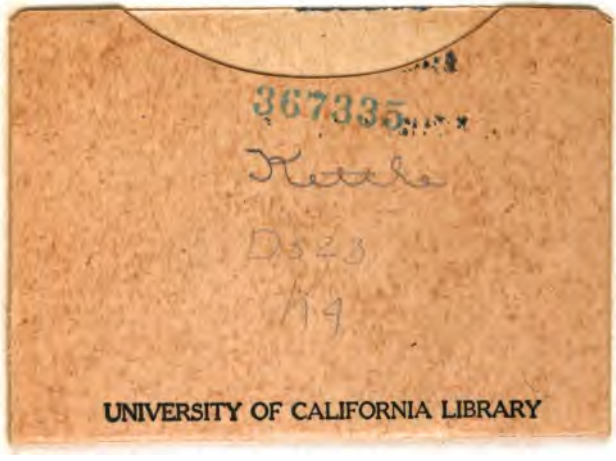
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